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Performativity and Performance: Representing the Tattooed Body.

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PERFORMATIVITY AND PERFORMANCE: REPRESENTING THE TATTOOED BODY

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ABSTRACT

In this study I examine visual representations of tattooed bodies in three arenas of cultural production: tattoo conventions, advertising, and neo-tribal books. Through the methodological lens of genealogies of performance, I analyze these texts' construction of the tattooed body as classed, gendered, and exotic. I argue that contemporary representations of the tattooed body resist and reproduce discursive power regimes by surrogating prior cultural performances and representations of performance. I contend that contemporary visual representations of the tattooed body succeed in resisting discursive authority when they performatively cite multiple and transgressive authorities. I additionally indicate that the body in representation transgresses cultural normalization strategies when it refuses to be categorized as a system of separate and, in their separation, silenced parts.

The first case study traces the discursive history of the social status of tattooed bodies performing at the Southern Comfort Tattoo Expo. I link the performance styles and spatial logic of this tattoo convention to the illustrated men and women performing on sideshow stages in circus and carnival venues at the turn of the last century.

The second case study situates the tattooed body within gender discourse. I begin with an interpretation of a late 1990s Tampax advertising campaign featuring a tattooed Rosie the Riveter. I then draw interpretive connections between that advertisement and the Marlboro Man advertising campaign initiated during the 1950s

before returning again to the 1990s and an evaluation of a Sony PlaySation advertisement.

The third case study addresses the construction of the tattooed body as an exotic modern primitive within three books: Modern Primitives, Return of the Tribal, and Customizing the Body. The analysis of these texts suggests that modern primitive discourse creates its own authoritative history as well as attempts to occlude the histories of the sideshow at the turn of the century and the working-class masculine history of the mid-century.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Representation mingles with what it represents, to the point where one speaks as one writes, one thinks as if the represented were nothing more than the shadow or reflection of the representer. A dangerous promiscuity and a nefarious complicity between the reflection and the reflected which lets itself be seduced narcissistically. In the play of representation, the point of origin becomes ungraspable. There are things like reflecting pools, and images, an infinite reference from one to the other, but no longer a source, a spring. There is no longer a simple origin. For what is reflected is split *in itself* [emphasis in original] and not only as an addition to itself of its own image.
(Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology 36)

Indeed, it is in moments of the most intense performative play–the moments when the gaps between signifiers and their avowed signified are widest–that history creeps back in (or, perhaps more accurately, out of) representation.
(Della Pollock 27)

But what I don't like is the *obvious* [emphasis in original]. I'm in theater 24 hours a day when I'm in public.
(Tattoo Mike, Modern Primitives 39)

Since the rise of the dime museum in the United States, tattooed bodies have been displayed and exhibited in American culture. In venues such as the carnival and circus side show, P.T. Barnum and others took advantage of late nineteenth and early twentieth century fascination with displays of human anomalies. Fascination with difference gave way to disgust and derision, and the popularity of outdoor amusements and sideshow exhibitions dissolved in the face of television and film during the early to middle of the twentieth century. The illustrated person moved off the sideshow platform, and tattooing became associated with masculinity, lack of control, and the

social underclass. Since the late 1960s, tattooing has apparently moved from the underclass to the middle class with the advent of what many call the tattoo renaissance. Tattooed bodies frequently appear in advertisements, television programs, and films. Tattooed bodies also parade across stages at tattoo conventions, in performance art venues, and at rock concerts.

The late twentieth-century trendiness of tattooing among the middle class and celebrity class, the increasing number of women being tattooed, and the popularity of New Age spirituality rhetoric has failed, however, to fully dissociate representations of the tattooed body from its working-class, masculine, and deviant discursive history. The question becomes, then, how did tattooing become associated with the working class, masculinity, and deviance? Moreover, do contemporary representations of tattooing and the tattooed body visually remember and rehearse those discursive constructions? Finally, how can the tattooed body in representation escape or resist its discursive historical yoke?

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore how meaning has been made and contested by/at the site of the tattooed body in U.S. culture in the twentieth century. I analyze visual representations of the tattooed body in three sites of cultural production – tattoo conventions, advertising, and neo-tribalism books. I additionally investigate the production of the tattooed body in visual representation as a classed, gendered, and exotic body. I argue that contemporary representations of the tattooed body surrogate earlier representations: reciting and revising previous constructions of meaning of the

tattooed body throughout the last century. Contemporary visual representations of the tattooed body are culturally evaluated, therefore, based both upon the social discourses used to evaluate the prior representations as well as the revision of those discourses made possible by new social contexts. This process of historical citation empowers contemporary representations of the tattooed body to reproduce and potentially alter prior discourse without entirely erasing or recuperating the meanings transmitted by previous representations. Contemporary representation of the tattooed body in the United States recalls, consequently, the complicated history of the cultural display, categorization, interpretation, and evaluation of the tattooed body throughout the century.

I additionally suggest that the tacit purpose of the contemporary representations is a redefinition of the tattooed body that desires to discount negative historical meanings (i.e. deviance and primitivity) and generate more positive associations and meanings (i.e. individual expression and embodied spirituality). This study's primary goal is not to provide a definitive explanation of *what* the tattooed body means, however. My intent is to investigate *how* representations of the tattooed body in contemporary U.S. culture acquire meaning and from *where* meaning derives. My position addresses the problematics of representation, cultural studies, body theory in general and the tattooed body in particular.

Representing the Tattooed Body

The politics of representation are at the heart of contemporary cultural studies research and critical inquiry. Researchers in cultural studies have suggested that social

power is produced, reproduced and, potentially, resisted within social and historical discursive regimes cited and constructed through representation. Research in cultural studies has, therefore, undertaken the task of exposing the power relations implicit in the process of representation. Hall, for example, argues that cultural studies "has to analyze certain things about the constitutive and political nature of representation itself" ("Cultural Studies" 107).

In order to do so the process of representation must first be examined. Representation is "the practice of constructing meaning through the use of signs and language" (Du Gay 24). Meaning is not transmitted by but rather created through the process of representation. This process, according to Hall, forms symbolic vehicles that are meaningful only in relation to social and historical discourse: "But it is in the discursive form that the circulation of the product takes place, as well as its distribution to different audiences. Once accomplished, the discourse must then be translated–transformed, again,–into social practices if the circuit is to be both completed and effective" ("Encoding, Decoding" 508). Consequently, in order for a representation to have any meaningful effect, to achieve a communicative end, "it must first be appropriated as a meaningful discourse and be meaningfully decoded" (Hall, "Encoding, Decoding" 509).

Wallis has suggested that this decoding process is often "misleading" because representations are presented as natural facts which "obscure our apprehension of reality" (xv). While I doubt that Hall would agree that there is any true version of reality to apprehend (or that the search for such a reality should be our primary task), he

does find critical value in explaining the process by which historical codes become naturalized:

> [C]ertain codes may, of course, be so widely distributed in a specific language community or culture, and be learned at so early an age, that they appear not to be constructed--the effect of an articulation between sign and referent--but to be 'naturally' given. Simple visual signs appear to have achieved a 'near-universality' in this sense: though evidence remains that even apparently 'natural' visual codes are culture specific. However, this does not mean that no codes have intervened; rather, that the codes have been profoundly *naturalized*. ("Encoding, Decoding" 511)

Representations, in other words, have no "natural" or inherent meaning separate from social and historical codes and contexts. The implications of this statement for the cultural critic are threefold. Initially, she should take nothing for granted when decoding the signs within any given representation. A cow, to borrow Hall's example, is never simply a cow. Secondly, she should make the historical move to explain the process of naturalization and unearth its constitutive social and cultural discourses. What codes, in other words, are being signified by the cow given its specific social/cultural/historical/temporal/spatial context and what is the lineage or genealogy of that discourse. Finally, she should seek out the existing systems of power and authority that this process either challenges or supports.

One of the consequences of such an approach to representation is that representations theoretically become open to a variety of interpretations. Each text, in other words, is polysemic or "seen to generate a potentially infinite range of meanings" (Hebdige 139). If, for instance, the critic begins to question the "natural" meaning of a sign and deconstruct the process of naturalization, then the "fact" of the representation becomes open to multiple interpretations. As Peggy Phelan explains: "Representation

follows two laws: it always conveys more than it intends; and it is never totalizing. The 'excess' meaning conveyed by representation creates a supplement that makes multiple and resistant meanings possible" (2). Textual analysis therefore concentrates on the process of meaning-construction in order to determine which meanings are privileged at any given time and whether or not the representation fulfills the possibility to contest the logic of reproduction.

The possibility of resistant meanings does not, unfortunately, guarantee their activation by the reader. As Phelan points out, representations are often (mis)taken for "real truths" resulting from an "insufficient understanding of the relationship between visibility, power, identity and liberation" (2). Conceptually "open" representations are, in effect, closed (made finite) in the decoding process. The theoretical possibility of polysemy, the simultaneity of resistance and reproduction, is not realized. This conflation of the real with the representational leads to what Phelan calls the trap of visibility. Phelan argues that visibility privileges the totalizing capitalistic gaze and promotes "voyeurism, fetishism, the colonialist/imperial appetite for possession" (6). She indicates that marginalized groups succumb to this snare when they act out the belief that public representation is empowering. In other words, the mere visual presence of a marginalized individual or group does not force society to confront its own beliefs. The representation merely reinforces the norm. In this sense, visual representations do not activate the audience as agents but place them in an already designated role as "consumer" whose function is not to make meaning out of the image but to complacently own it with their consumptive gaze.

Representation can, however, break free of the trap of visibility when it resists reproduction of social norms and when the reproduction of Other as the Same is not guaranteed (Phelan 2). The premise here is that the distinctiveness of difference is interpretively muted by the creation of binary categories. The Other is easily understood because difference has been flattened out into a single category. When representations deny this interpretive instinct, Phelan argues, representation becomes performance. Phelan's definition of performance as "representation without reproduction" assumes that representations, like live performance, can activate the potential reciprocal gaze by talking back to their audience (3-4). Representations are non-reproductive when they destabilize categories like "same" and "different" by both concealing and revealing the naturalized codes that constitute taken-for-granted reality. Meaning is negotiated in the area where the representation overflows the controlling effect of social discourse. Performative representations, moreover, position their audience members as "agents in the production of cultural meanings" (Pollock 27). In a Brechtian sense, the representation alienates itself from any "real" truth in the same way that a Brechtian actor seeks to alienate him or herself from the character in order to engage the audience critically and unmask discourse. In Epic Theatre, for example, the production of the play calls attention to the constructedness of the character and the character's social milieu using a variety of acting techniques.[1] In so doing, the actor encourages the audience to be what Brecht would call smoking observers or agents in the production of the play's meaning. The key for the Brechtian actor, as for

the resistant representation, is to use techniques that prevent the naturalized codes from taking over in order to escape the logic of social inscription.

Body Theory

The question that this study addresses is whether or not visual representations of the body in general, and the tattooed body specifically, can escape social inscription. Furthermore, if this is theoretically possible, do representations of the body actualize this potential and, if so (or, if not) how is that accomplished? The premise upon which these questions rely is tied not only to the issues of power and representation previously addressed, but also to the particularity of the body within those academic discourses.

As Turner suggests in his Introduction to the edited volume The Body, "there has been a re-evaluation of the importance of the body" in recent social theory (11). A trend in much of this research has been to negotiate the boundaries between self/other, nature/culture, and mind/body in order to locate individual agency (or the denial of individual agency). Michel Foucault has been an instrumental force in this direction. In Discipline and Punish, Foucault formulates the concept of the body as inscribed by social power through discourse: "But the body is also directly involved in a political field. Power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs" (25). Social ritual as propagated by social discourse controls the action of the body and, in so doing, reciprocally controls the meanings attributed to said action. In Discipline and Punish, Foucault was particularly invested in bodies marked as socially deviant. Prisoners' bodies, for example, were controlled not only by the space of the prison, but also by the

discourses of biological description and classification: "The examination leaves behind it a whole meticulous archive constituted in terms of bodies and days. The examination that places individuals in a field of surveillance also situates them in a network of writing; it engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them" (189). This discourse, in the form of documentation, categorized bodies and fixed norms (Foucault 190). The now "deviant" body was then reciprocally measured against the norms that classification created. The body controlled in this sense appears to have little recourse to resist inscription. Social discourse is inscribed upon the body regardless of individual subjectivity or agency.[2] As Butler explains, discursive systems thus perpetuate their power: "What is 'forced' by the symbolic, then, is a citation of its law that reiterates and consolidates the ruse of its own force" (Bodies that Matter 15).

According to Foucault, power is not amorphous. Power is a process of enactment:

> [T]he power exercised on the body is conceived not as a property but as a strategy, that its effects of domination are attributed not to 'appropriation', but to dispositions, maneuvers, tactics, techniques, functionings; that one should decipher in it a network of relations, constantly in tension, in activity, rather than a privilege that one might possess; that one should take as its model a perpetual battle rather than a contract regulating a transaction or the conquest of a territory. In short, this power is exercised rather than possessed. (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 26).

Discursive regimes thus produce the tactics of domination, often conceived in terms of normalization and homogeneity. Actions of bodies are controlled physically as well as interpretively dominated via the machinations of power operating through social discourse.[3]

One of the questions inspired by Foucault's work addresses the issue of individual agency within systems of power. If power is an activity, an assemblage of behaviors, if follows that it can be reciprocally operational. Bodies can exercise power as well as be dominated by discourse:

> The body is at once the point at which the nexus of structures–political, cultural, medical, technological, and linguistic–intersect, and the experiential ground on which the resistance to or engagement with those structures begins. We act, as we write, with the body. The best recent work on the body and culture has thus stressed the way in which bodily and textual relations constantly interpenetrate. (Armstrong 10)

The body is that which both experiences and resists structures of domination. Recent explorations of the body have consequently theorized the body's potential for resistance within regimes of domination. In Bodies That Matter, Judith Butler, for example, desires to understand which bodies in society come to "matter" and why. Butler focuses on bodies excluded by social discourse. She suggests that agency, conceptualized as political activity, can be mobilized around bodies that have been excluded or "disidentified" by discursive boundaries that construct certain bodies as socially and culturally privileged. Bodies that exist outside of the norm can potentially contest the norm because they are not compelled to act in accordance with its logic. The success of the resistance depends upon the ability of the "abjected or delegitimated" body to refuse reproduction as the Other (Butler, Bodies That Matter 15).

Arthur Frank also addresses the issue of agency. Like Butler, Frank contends that bodies are discursively constructed. According to Frank, discourses "imply cognitive mappings of the body's possibilities and limitations, which bodies experience as already there for their self-understanding" (48). Frank insists that social discourse

not only imposes meaning upon the body, however, but also provides it with a variety of "techniques" which "are as much resources for bodies as they are constraints on them" (Frank 48). Agency, consequently, resides in improvisation: "Parameters can always be improvised upon, but depending on the orientation to the body, this possibility may or may not be grasped, and if grasped will be used to different ends" (49). Bodies can seemingly resist domination by inventively using the techniques of domination for their own ends.

Dick Hebdige articulates one example of the use of techniques of the body for resistance. Hebdige concentrates on the use of fashion by subcultural groups and argues that these groups deform commodity signs of mainstream culture in order to reorganize cultural meaning. For example, Hebdige argues that punk subculture's (anti)fashion appropriation of "unremarkable and inappropriate items" such as safety-pins, razor blades, and clothes-pins exposes the constructedness of punk style as well as the mainstream culture it defaces (136). The key to the success of the subversive style lies in the desire to remain illegible: "its refusal to cohere around a readily identifiable set of central values" (Hebdige 140). The efficacy of such a move is, however, evanescent. Subversive style is recuperated when the subcultural signs are converted into mass commodities or labeled as deviant by dominant groups" (Hebdige 131). In order to make sense out of the style that has negated existing structures of interpretation, dominant culture either creates a new classification or manipulates the style to fit into a current system of categorization.

This process of normalization often occurs when the body is the object of representation. This transpires, for example, when mainstream culture wrestles for control of subcultural signs by transforming punk counter-culture into a fashion (as opposed to an identity) statement. Represented in fashion magazines, on runways, and sold in department stores, punk style is normalized and controlled, losing its subversive potential. The body in action, the performing body, has resources at its disposal for the rearticulation and resistance of discursive domination, but it seems that representations of the body often render those resources impotent. Phelan's definition of performance, however, suggests that there are moments when representations refuse recuperation or reproduction. This brings me back full circle to the issue with which I initiated this discussion; can and how does the body in representation evade inscription? Or, in other words, what constitutes agency within representation?

Performativity

The process of accessing and citing prior discourses is central to my position regarding the meaning of the body in representation and performativity explains that process. J. L. Austin originally proposed the term "performative" as a means to distinguish between utterances that state facts and those that perform acts (5). Performatives are acts with specific intentions located within a concrete context. For instance, the utterance "I do" becomes an action (marriage) within the context of a Christian wedding ceremony. In "Signature Event Context," Derrida extends Austin's work with the argument that the source of power of performative utterances is located in their citation of authority (17). In other words, "I do" as an utterance is not culturally

productive without reiterating and citing a series of actions and utterances which came prior to its iteration and provide it with authority (legal and religious discourse, for example). Judith Butler, citing Derrida, further suggests that performativity is the citational process where discourse creates what it regulates (Bodies that Matter 2). When the current utterance (I do) refers to prior discourse (i.e. religious and legal), that utterance both produces the act of marriage and controls what that act is and means. Furthermore, the process of citation or reiteration is where discourse receives its force, its ability to act or produce that which it names (Butler, Bodies that Matter 12-13). In other words, the phrase "I do" is not felicitous (successful) if it does not cite the discourses surrounding wedding vows (if the phrase is uttered spontaneously in a pub at two o'clock in the morning, for example). Butler explains that citationality explodes the notion that performativity is a singular act or utterance because performativity is "always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms" which "conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition" (Bodies that Matter 12). The successful performative is not only authorized by normalizing discourse, it also perpetuates the illusion of naturalization.

Two important analytical consequences of citationality are the distinction between individual agency and authority and the importance of form and context. E. Warwick Slinn articulates the differentiation between individual agency and authority in terms of the wedding example:

> It can no longer be assumed, therefore, that the speaker and performer are identical with the authority or power which authorizes the act: the speaker of the performative is defined by structures beyond his or her control. On the one hand, the agent who performs a marriage ceremony gains his or her authority

> from the church or state, not from personal intentions or will and on the other that agent may be as much defined by the formalism of the utterance as by his or her personal volition. (62)

The power of the performative utterance is more a function of the form of the utterance (and, by extension, the composition of the text) than of individual agency. In order to identify the structures that produce discursive domination, Derrida moreover indicates, context must be understood not only to be that which surrounds the event of performing the utterance, but also as that which determines the event of performance and is consequently to be found within the event/representation (Derrida, "Limited Inc abc" 60). An analysis that purports to describe, interpret, and evaluate performative utterances for their performative force must, therefore, attend to the intersection between utterance form and external context as well as identify the source(s) of discursive authority.

Performativity's theoretical application has been extended beyond the conversational utterance into studies of representation and performance.[4] As my continued reliance on Butler may have already suggested, her study, Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex", provides particular insight into the politics of representation of the body through the theoretical gaze of performativity. Butler successfully deconstructs hetero-normativity in an effort to demonstrate that "sex" is just as much a normalizing discursive construction as "gender." Butler does not conclude, however, that historicity and citationality condemn representations to infinitely reproduce domination. She argues instead that the very nature of repetition lies in its inability to exactly reproduce hegemonic discourse:

> [I]t is also by virtue of this reiteration that gaps and fissures are opened up as the constitutive instabilities in such constructions, as that which escapes or exceeds the norm, as that which cannot be wholly defined or fixed by the repetitive labor of that norm. The instability is the deconstituting possibility in the very process of repetition, the power that undoes the very effects by which "sex" is stabilized, the possibility to put the consolidation of the norms of "sex" into a potentially productive crisis. (Bodies that Matter 10).

Representations of the body, therefore, that *both* expose normalization (like subversive style and drag, for example) *and* refuse phenomenal closure by continually questioning themselves and their construction (a promise she hopes "queer" can fulfill but that Hebdige's analysis suggests that punk, finally, could not), break through reproduction and social inscription into performance and thereby become a resource for individual agency in representation.

Performativity, consequently, suggests that acts of interpretation and representation are tied to contexts that both surround and are located within discourse. In this sense, the process of meaning construction occurs when a representation refers to prior representations and the discourses with which they were inscribed. Applied to the analysis of texts, performativity therefore helps locate and critique social inscription:

> Performative analysis exposes the contingent materiality of phenomena previously believed natural. It traces arbitrary perceptual and expressive outlines that make the phenomena appear accessible to consciousness in/as relevant cultural categories. (Gingrich-Philbrook 123).

As Gingrich-Philbrook suggests, performative analysis provides an entrance into the process of meaning construction. It takes up the cause of deconstructing social and historical codes and refuses to accept the logic of naturalization. To that end, it opens the critical door into locating the potential for agency within representation by identifying the discursive strategies that deny agency.

The Tattooed Body

The body that I am interested in is the body that has been tattooed or, more accurately, contemporary representations of that body within particular sites of cultural production. Tattooed bodies are significant for a number of reasons. Initially, they are perhaps the most obvious visual testament to the body's social inscription because they are, after all, bodies explicitly written upon. Moreover, contemporary discourse from within the community of tattooed individuals seeks to assert individual agency in the process of becoming tattooed through the rhetoric of self-expression. Tattoos are increasingly acquired under the guise of willing refusal of social norms prescribing appropriate and "natural" forms of physical alteration and adornment. Additionally, tattoos playfully problematize terms such as Phelan's "marked" and Butler's "matter." Phelan suggests that the body that is socially marked carries social value. Similarly, Butler argues that discourse creates categories that constitute bodies that occupy positions of privilege and those that are abject. The tattooed body is simultaneously marked, in the sense that the tattoo is a visual sign that "spoils" the "natural" body, and socially "unmarked" because it is a body lacking social privilege. The tattooed body is also one whose materiality is apparent, thus potentially exposing the construction of the natural, and a body that does not "matter" by dominant discursive standards.

Moreover, the tattooed body highlights the potential for manipulating the materiality of the body. It is a porous body that is ever changing and in process (DeMello, "The Carnivalesque Body" 77-8). It will always be a tattooed body, but the specific images inscribed may change or there be more images added.[5] My small

(quarter-sized) black and gray tattoo of the head of a unicorn, for example, was changed when I had it covered by a larger (softball sized) vividly colored abstract image that most closely resembles a planet with a number of rings or swirling comet trails. The unicorn has been erased in the sense that it is no longer visible, but remains intact in the influence it had over the abstract design's size and shape. On the other hand, I could have chosen to retain the unicorn on my shoulder and simply incorporated it into a larger design that could eventually cover my entire back (perhaps eventually merging with the Chinese character tattooed on my lower back). In both cases, my body retains its position as a tattooed form, but the specific types of signs it carries potentially communicate differently.

The tattooed body, consequently, is an important metaphor for social inscription as well as individual agency. Like clothing, hairstyles, jewelry and other forms of physical adornment, tattoos decorate the body. Like plastic surgery, tattoos are a relatively permanent alteration of the body. The tattooed body, therefore, is controlled by the same discourses that seek to manipulate the body in general. Tattoos are unique, however, because they are inserted in the skin (as opposed to placed upon and over the surface of the body), are relatively permanent, and, except for cosmetic tattoos, never desire to make the body's surface appear more natural. The explicit visibility of the tattooed body, therefore, flaunts the multiple discourses seeking to control the meaning of the body. The tattooed body is consequently not only an excellent metaphor for theories of social inscription; it is also a key cultural site for the evocation of body theory in general.

From Deviance to Distinction

The importance of the tattooed body has not gone unnoticed by the academic and popular press. The following discussion narrates this attention in an effort to begin to tease out some of the common discourses cited and produced by the tattooed body. Anthropological, sociological, psychological, and critical historical perspectives of pre-1960 tattoo imagery and the practice of tattooing tend to concentrate upon the connection between tattooing and either tribal rituals in non-western cultures or stigma and deviance in the west. Studies that focus on the emergence of post-1960 tattoos and tattooing practices, on the other hand, explain motivations behind and effects of the surge in tattooing's popularity after 1960 in the United States. In the end, there is no consensus about what the tattooed body means or how that meaning is produced.

Stigma and Deviance

Tattoo research has documented the history of tattooing as a non-Western cultural practice. Much of this historical research describes tattooing practices in "tribal" cultures such as the Maori, Native Alaskan, and Ancient Egyptian communities (Hambly; Gathercole; Gritton; Bianchi). The tattoo within these contexts is often a ritual process of social transformation and tribal identity and status marking. When interpretations of tattooing move West, however, the anthropology of culture turns to the sociology and cultural critique of deviance. The history of tattooing in Europe has, for example, been discussed primarily in terms of the relationship between tattooing and tattoos and stigma. Essays by Jones and Gustafson trace the connection between the term *stigma* and the practice of tattooing in ancient Greek and Roman culture.

Gustafson argues, for example, that tattooing was an effort to discipline the body and mark its deviance but that its meaning was ultimately ambivalent because of a "paradigm shift" marked by the Apostle Paul's reference to being tattooed with the marks of Jesus (29). MacQuarrie also takes up the rhetoric of stigma when he argues that references to tattoos in the classical and medieval world associate the practice with "both Christianity and with demons, with both civilization and the forces of disorder" (44).

The tension between tattooing and control/order and disorder/resistance has also been the subject of academic discourse regarding specific tattooing traditions in European history. Anderson, for example, addresses tattoos as punishment when she argues that tattoos were used as penal marks on Indian convicts in the nineteenth century (102-117). Caplan additionally suggests that nineteenth-century European tattooing was largely understood through the discourse of criminology (156-173). The power of the convict body to resist disciplinary regimens through tattooing is the issue at the heart of Maxwell-Stuart and Duffield's analysis of convict transportation to Australia (118-135). Their texts are the tattoos on the convict bodies and the themes represented in the tattoo imagery. Schrader's analysis of the practice of convict tattooing in Russia and the Soviet Union moves from tattoo as text to tattoo as a process of resistance that produced inscriptions that marked countercultural status and identity (174-192).

Investigations into group identification and criminal and social deviance also crossed the ocean to America. A variety of scholars have categorized the different

groups of people associated with tattooing. Bikers, convicts, sailors, punks, and juvenile delinquents categorize tattoo clientele during the mid-century prior to 1960 (DeMello, Bodies of Inscription; Steward; Sanders, Customizing the Body; Seaton). The primary explanation for the popularity of tattooing among these groups argues that tattoos symbolized group affiliation. Perhaps the most culturally visible segment of the tattooed community during the mid-century was the military community. Alan Govenar suggests that tattoos "bound" servicemen together, "fortified the masculine egos of the wearers or vented the frustrations and anxieties of war" (Introduction xx). Perhaps as a result of this function, tattooing during World War II "became so widespread that is was difficult to enforce any established regulations" (Introduction xxi). Despite the popularity of tattooing among the men in the military, however, "both the army and the navy publicly stated their disapproval of tattooing" and after the war, "health authorities, in a combined effort with the police and courts, began to inspect tattooing practices more closely" (Introduction xx, xxi). Even in the military, tattoos were an unauthorized practice. At the end of the war, many servicemen began to recognize the negative social value of their tattoos and sought to have them removed or explained the tattoo away as a result of intoxicated decision-making (Govenar, Introduction xxi). Moreover, the next generation of soldiers were less interested in tattooing (Govenar, Introduction xxi).

Sanders indicates, in fact, that by the mid-twentieth century, "tattooing was firmly established as a definedly deviant practice in the public mind" and that the "tattoo was a symbolic poke-in-the-eye directed at those who were law-abiding, hard-working,

family-oriented, and stable" (Customizing the Body 18). There is also a body of psychological research that attempts to establish a connection between tattooing and deviant behavior (G. Newman; Goldstein; A. J. W. Taylor; Briggs). This continuing association of the tattoo with low class and criminally deviant behavior led to regulatory efforts and ultimately the demise of tattooing in a postwar 1950s that "emphasized conformity and material comfort" (Govenar, "The Changing Image" 230). The connection between tattooing and disciplinary control empowered through the discursive association between tattooing and stigma is, therefore, relatively clear. Moreover, the body under discipline can also use tattooing as an image as well as a process of resistance and group identification.

After the Renaissance

In more recent popular history, the association between tattoos and deviance has been contested by a new rhetoric. After 1960, a generation of tattoo clients and artists emerged which resulted in what is now called the "tattoo renaissance" (Rubin; Caplan xi; DeMello, Bodies of Inscription; Sanders, Customizing the Body 18-20;). The renaissance is characterized by a larger number of middle-class clients, artists with a higher level of education, and an increasing appreciation for the artistry of tattooing by both artists and clients. The rhetoric of the renaissance has, according to DeMello, displaced the classic, traditional, working-class aesthetic of tattooing as a folk art with the rhetoric of self help and New Age spirituality (Bodies of Inscription 137-151).[6]

The rise is popularity among the middle class has resulted in a cultural effort to recode the meaning of tattoos and has led many to contemplate the social and cultural

impetus and implications of this shift. Despite the increased attention, however, there remains little agreement or consistency in explanations of the meaning of tattoos and tattooing in American culture. Explanations for the tattoo renaissance in the last few decades range from a connection to the emergence of performance art (M. Taylor 31), to a connection with increased media representation (Hewitt 80), to an association with 1970s counter-culture (Mifflin 56), to the legitimation of tattooing as an art form (Sanders 19), and to a reaction against postmodern signification (Vale and Juno 5).

Moreover, there is disagreement not only about why the renaissance occurred, but also about what tattooing means in this new context. Clinton Sanders argues, for example, that tattooing is a public proclamation of attachment to deviant groups (Customizing the Body 2). Dan Brouwer's research of stigmatization and HIV/AIDS tattoos falls along this line of analysis. Mark Taylor indicates, furthermore, that body art represents a sustained effort to "reverse the dematerialization of art by making the body matter" (34). Hardy indicates that, among other things, tattoos represent a type of "psychic armor" ("Tattooing as a Medium" 25). Kim Hewitt proposes that tattoos are symbols of identity (83). Finally, Robert Bogdan indicates that tattoos knock "the rungs out of the American ladder to success" because of their permanent and class defined marking (240). To make things a bit more interesting, there is some debate as to whether tattooing will lose its power and become appropriated and sanitized into a "mundane act of conformity" (Hewitt 83), or whether it will hold sway as a "social barometer, revealing more about the viewer than the wearer" (Hardy, "Tattooing as a Medium" 25).

I think the best explanation so far for the rise in popularity of tattooing among middle-class Americans in the last thirty years is Margo DeMello's argument in Bodies of Inscription that the rhetoric of the New Age, Ecology, women's, men's, self-help and Goddess religion movements of the 1960s and 1970s led to a change in the way many middle-class Americans viewed their relationship with their bodies, the earth, and their spirituality. As a result, DeMello argues, middle-class America reinvented tattooing from a practice of desecration to one of decoration, and tattooing was reenvisioned as a means to express one's identity and spirituality. DeMello further suggests that the working-class and traditional history of the tattoo in America has been displaced by the rhetoric of the renaissance in the popular and scholarly media as well as by the personal narratives of middle-class tattoo collectors.[7] What I contend is that the life of the traditional/classic/old time/working-class tattoo is very much alive in the performances of the tattooed body in contemporary society.[8] I am suggesting, furthermore, that the tattooed body retains and restores its past in performance and through narrative as much by the absence of this history as by its presence.[9]

The renaissance has also produced scholarship focused on the lineage of popular American tattooing within art and performance contexts. Fried and Fried, for example, sketch tattooing's folk-art heritage. Hardy also explores the artistic history of tattooing and tailors his comments toward the evolution of tattooing practice and technique ("Tattooing as a Medium"). In his discussion about the changing image of tattooing from 1846-1966, Govenar addresses the issue of style and design of tattooing but expands his analysis to the practices of display of illustrated people, the increased

regulation of and subsequent demise of the popularity of tattooing in the 1950s, and the rise to legitimacy beginning again in the 1960s ("The Changing Image" 212-233). The practice of displaying illustrated people is further considered by Oettermann's discussion of the themes circulating around and in performances of illustrated people in America and Germany (193-211). Richard Bogdan also addresses the performance of illustrated people in his analysis of the social construction of freaks through modes of sideshow presentation (241-256). These approaches to the art and display of tattoos and tattooed people are connected in their attention to aesthetic detail and to the cultural reception of the art and performance and provide an excellent starting point for drawing larger connections between contemporary and historical performance and social discourse.

Between Deviance and Distinction

A common response to the multiplicity of disciplinary perspectives and theoretical approaches to the tattooed body has been a collective throwing up of one's hands and a general acceptance, even celebration, of the inability to theorize the tattooed body. Mark Taylor suggests, for example, that a scholarly and social conundrum surrounding the tattooed body exists largely because "tattooing inevitably slips between polarities customarily used to organize experience and structure knowledge" and cannot be fixed because it alternates between "unreconcilable opposites" (39). Govenar additionally offers that the complex subject/object relationship of the tattooed body in society is, perhaps, the source of the tattooed body's power to elude theoretical categorization ("Continuity and Change" 84). Likewise, Don

Ed Hardy states that it is the elusiveness of the tattooed body that attracts scholars: "Tattooing will continue to provide rich fodder for the dissecting tables of academia, but at core its power defies absolute classification" ("Tattooing as a Medium"25).

I fear that these conclusions may be a bit utopian but that within them lies a seed of what Butler may be seeking to find in the gaps and fissures produced by representational excess. In other words, tattoos present an interpretive conundrum because they have either been addressed as an individual's self-expression *or* a symbol of group identification *or* as a process opening up the body's surface as a site of inscription. Each of these approaches demonstrates a particular theoretical discourse laid upon the tattooed body but does not interrogate the social process of meaning construction. The conclusion that the body is elusive, however, hints at that process because none of these individual discourses seems to completely satisfy. What is missing, I believe, is an attendance to context and history.

Method

In order to bring the discourse of history and the performativity of representational context into the discussion of representations of the tattooed body, my procedure of analysis takes its cue from Joseph Roach's genealogies of performance. According to Roach, genealogies of performance "document the historical transmission and dissemination of cultural practices through collective representations" ("Culture and Performance" 48). The sources for such a documentary history are diverse:

> Performance genealogies draw on the idea of expressive movements as mnemonic reserves, including patterned movements made and remembered by

> bodies, residual movements retained implicitly in images or words (or in the silences between them), and imaginary movements dreamed in minds, not prior to language but constitutive of it, a psychic rehearsal for physical actions drawn from a repertoire that culture provides. (Roach, Cities of the Dead 26)

Performance genealogists approach the culture of the present as a complex puzzle whose scattered pieces contain fragments of images, words, thoughts, and actions, which, once assembled, create a picture of cultural memory.

In his genealogy of circum-Atlantic performances in Cities of the Dead, for example, Roach draws connections between cultural performances of burials and sacrifices, acts of obedience and disobedience, slave auctions and segregation, which he suggests embody the collective memory of the region and act as vehicles of cultural transmission (13). His narrative draws from diverse texts including, but not limited to, written descriptions of historical performances by their contemporary audiences, paintings, photographs, poetry, drama, legal records, newspaper articles, advertisements and personal observation. The combination of these texts is designed to provide both a historical context for and evidence of the different modes of communication that "have produced one another interactively over time" (Roach, Cities of the Dead 11). In the end, performance genealogies actively interpret the history of the present through analysis of textual fragments of cultural communication "under the rubric of performance" (Roach, Cities of the Dead, 12).

Additionally, Roach studies his chosen performance genres in what he calls "narrowly delimited sites" in order to identify and trace cultural memory (Cities of the Dead 13). In essence, he draws interpretive connections between contemporary performance events such as the street performances of Mardi Gras in New Orleans and

the historical events and performances that the contemporary embodiments recall and revive. A genealogy of performance articulates how the body in and through performance events enacts, and through enactment transmits, culture.

Surrogation

Central to Roach's position is the notion that contemporary performances are surrogates of their cultural predecessors. Surrogation is the process through which culture reproduces and re-creates itself by attempting to replace actual or perceived vacancies in social relations/cultural performances with alternatives (Roach, Cities of the Dead 2). In other words, surrogation is a doomed search for originals by auditioning stand-ins for a performance. The alternatives or stand-ins, according to Roach, never quite "fit" exactly because they either are deficient or they overflow and provide a surplus (Cities of the Dead 2). When (and Roach indicates that this seems inevitable) the surrogate fails to "fit" perfectly into the gap created by the loss of the "original," Roach argues that culture makes an effort to make sense out of and, consequently, smooth out the bumpy transition to the surrogate. He argues that culture publicly enacts forgetting to "either blur the obvious discontinuities" or "exaggerate them in order to mystify a previous Golden Age, now lapsed" (Cities of the Dead 3).

Because Roach argues that culture is in a constant process of surrogation, the search for an original is fruitless because the bottom will always drop out of the certainty that you have found the origin of the cultural performance you are investigating. In his interpretation of Foucault, Roach suggests that genealogies of performance assume that "discontinuities rudely interrupt the succession of surrogates,

who are themselves the scions of a dubious bloodline that leads the genealogist back to the moment of apparent origins" (Cities of the Dead 25). Once the genealogist arrives at the apparent origin, however, what she will find is not inherent identity but resistance. The charge of the genealogist is therefore to create a historically and culturally situated description of the image of an original as imagined by the cultural present via the cultural surrogate. In order to do so, Roach's method is designed to allow the researcher access into moments of disjuncture through a culturally and historically contextualized analysis of the body and space in cultural performances.

Kinesthetic Imagination

Roach defines kinesthetic imagination as resources of memory located in the human body and acted out through physical expression (Cities of the Dead 27). He indicates that kinesthetic imagination operates in theatrical performances, the performance of everyday lives, and the memory of those performances located in representations; it is a method for the restoration of behavior and a means of its expansion (Cities of the Dead 27). In other words, the actions of bodies in social space are resources of cultural memory and are understood according to their adherence to or violation of norms constructed through and by social discourse. Furthermore, kinesthetic imagination is also present in "systems of behavioral memory such as law and custom" (Cities of the Dead 27). In order to attend to the evidence of the relationship between discourse and bodily construction, therefore, both the form of the body in representation and the memory of the body in action and representation must be addressed.

Vortices of Behavior

Vortices of behavior, according to Roach, are "sites of memory" that function "to canalize specified needs, desires, and habits in order to reproduce them" (Cities of the Dead 27-28). The power of place is to provide a physical, tangible location where everyday attitudes may be "legitimated, reinforced, celebrated, or intensified" (Roach, Cities of the Dead 28). Roach locates these vortices largely within physical spaces (the marketplace, the theater district, and the square) and indicates that they are places where social necessity brings audiences together and produces performers (Cities of the Dead 28). Consequently, the physical context actively participates in the performance by directing the performers into specified roles that reproduce norms of behavior.

Displaced Transmission

The third principle that Roach articulates forges the conceptual interaction between kinesthetic imagination and vortices of behavior in performance. Displaced transmission involves the "adaptation of historic practices to changing conditions, in which popular behaviors are resituated in new locales" (Roach, Cities of the Dead 28). Roach argues that these adaptations not only reproduce, but also create and overturn tradition because "no action or sequence of actions may be performed exactly the same way twice: they must be reinvented or recreated at each appearance" (Cities of the Dead 29). Displaced transmission, consequently, combines descriptions of kinesthetic imagination and vortices of behavior in order to draw interpretive and evaluative conclusions about the alterations and revisions of historical practices. Rather than focusing on the internalized experience of the physical body or on the physiology of the

human body, Roach's analytical move is toward the evaluation of the form of the body in performance and representation as a creator and transmitter of culture.

In terms of this analysis, therefore, genealogical criticism is a process of articulating the form and shape of the body as a cultural performance text. Without this dialogue, the body's surface remains flat and uninteresting. With this dialogue, the body's form is active and intriguing. I actively participate in the construction of the kinesthetic memory rehearsed and erased because I am dialogically positioned both within the representation and outside of it. As a critic, I undertake "the hard historical work of diagnosing and analyzing the history and organization of current cultural practices. The resulting interpretation is a pragmatically guided reading of the coherence of the practices of society. It does not claim to correspond either to the everyday meanings shared by the actors or, in any simple sense to reveal the intrinsic meaning of the practices" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 124).

The value of the genealogical critique ultimately lies in identifying the cultural traditions that contemporary performances recall and locating the moments of excess and lack in their surrogation in order to expose the constructedness of meanings imposed upon the body. As Foucault explains, this interpretative move requires the critic to record "the singularity of events" (Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" 139). The secret to genealogy, therefore, is that things/events "have no essence or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms" (Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" 142). In other words, in the effort to write the history of the present so as to understand how contemporary rituals of power and technologies

of the body take shape, the critic must piece together the alien forms which constitute events (Dreyfus and Rabinow 119). Consequently, genealogies are both necessarily incomplete and highly specific because history is not and cannot be finalized. The genealogist approaches history from the present in an effort to reconstruct the jigsaw puzzle of events that participate in the meaning and construction of contemporary practices.

Significance

The significance of this study lies in its addition to research concerned with the tattooed body, as well as in terms of theorizing agency in representation through performativity. The tendency in research written about the tattooed body has been to describe tattoo artists and collectors, the types of tattoo designs, and the role that tattooing plays with regard to personal expression and ritual transformation. Much of this research privileges the personal narratives of tattooists and tattoo recipients in its articulation of the meaning individuals derive from the practice. Some of this research has drawn conclusions about the role the tattoo plays in the performance of identity and consequently has situated specific tattooed bodies within the social discourse of gender, ethnicity and class. Kristin Langellier's analysis of the narrative performance of a woman who chose to adorn her mastectomy scar with a tattoo, for example, indicates that this woman's personal narrative performance of identity both resists and recuperates dominant medical narratives as well as "other dominant ideologies of gender, ethnicity and class" (Langellier 34).

Margo DeMello also uses the personal narrative interview in Bodies of Inscription. DeMello combines her analysis of personal narratives with the analysis of both the popular and tattoo media. DeMello indicates that both the media and personal narratives participate in the discursive construction of the tattoo community during the tattoo renaissance. DeMello is particularly interested in the rhetorical reconfiguration of tattooing as a middle-class, high art form and argues that this rearticulation has been possible because of a variety of social movements in the 1960s and 1970s that provided the terminology/ideology the middle class could use to dissociate tattooing from the lower classes. I, like Langellier, am interested in the performance of the tattooed body and, like DeMello, am interested in the power of social discourse. Where my analysis differs is in terms of my focus on representations of the tattooed body as performative texts, and how representations engage the discourses of class, gender, and exoticism. This shift in focus is important because it accents the social construction of the tattooed body and discusses the role of history in the formulation and transmission of dominant and subversive discourse.

As previously noted, the history of tattooing has also been the subject of much attention in both academic and popular literature.[10] These historical narratives differ in scope and focus but are joined in their concentration on documenting, rather than critiquing, discourse. For example, Hambly is particularly concerned with the cultural history from an anthropological perspective and DeMello is interested in the social history. Bogdan's study of the social construction of freaks comes nearest to interrogating dominant discourses and their control over the construction of the tattooed

bodies' meaning. In Freak Show, he argues that the concept of "freak" was constructed through a series of conventions of sideshow display that fed into and out of dominant scientific discourses of social classification. Bogda33 points out that the label "freak" was an interpretation imposed upon sideshow performers by dominant culture and subsequently manipulated by sideshow promoters in order to sell tickets. Bogdan's work is important to this analysis because he highlights the power of performance in the construction of the meaning of the tattooed body in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. He also lays the discursive groundwork for claims that I make about the memory of scientific discourse retained in contemporary representations.

Although I am not attempting necessarily to extend Bogdan's argument or arguing for the continuation of the tattooed body's social construction as freakish, I do hope to show that contemporary representations of the tattooed body are tied genealogically to those early displays and exhibitions. This is important not only as a way to understand how representations of the tattooed body attain meaning but also because of the more general discursive connection I am drawing between the past and the present.[11]

This study also has important theoretical implications in terms of locating agency within the representational process of meaning construction. In other words, this study is concerned with what makes a performative successful in reproducing discourse and when that process opens up sites of resistance. Craig Gingrich-Philbrook expresses this question in terms of the felicity of performatives: what makes them work and under what conditions (124). He indicates that the omission of an emphasis on

felicity in research is "regrettable" because it "torques 'performativity' theory toward conspicuous performance (such as occurs on stage) as an explanatory metaphor for everyday performativity (such as occurs in conversation), rather than deconstructing the opposition" (124). In other words, it appears that his call is for research that seeks to understand the conditions that make discourse performative rather than research claiming that everyday discourse is performance. This study answers that call because of its emphasis on the form and content of representations of the tattooed body and how those representations cite historical discourses. The assumption is, of course, that multiple discourses will be reiterated. The key concerns here, then, are which discourses infuse the representation with meaning, which has the primary authority, and whether or not that process is reproductive or resistant. This is important because it answers the call for more research dedicated to understanding performatives through its consideration of the issue of force or uptake.

Uptake is the moment when discourse becomes performative. It is the moment when the congregation accepts the authorization of the phrase "I do" and empowers the phrase with the ability to create the marriage. Henry Gould calls for "a greater appreciation of the relation between the 'inner' structure or grammar of the performative and the 'outer' act that is performed . . . a clearer picture of the tendency to characterize (or rather reduce) this relationship to a relation between an 'inner' cause and an 'outer' consequence" (26). Gould's critique rejects the impulse to reduce performativity to a post hoc analysis of cause and effect (it was successful, therefore it must be performative) in favor of a closer look at the relationship between the structure of the

utterance (text) and the performative consequence. Gould's impetus seems to be to determine what it is about certain utterances or texts that lead the audience to make the connection to the authority that empowers the utterance; how does cultural authorization occur?

This study attends to the structure of the "utterance" in its analysis of the form of the representation and suggests that the source of cultural authorization relies upon the relationship between that form, its situational context, and its history. In order to understand how an utterance gains authority, therefore, one must attend to echoes of the past that resonate in the present. In her introduction to Exceptional Spaces: Essays in Performance and History, Della Pollock argues, for example, that "in historicity, the body practices history," and that "the body in action makes history answer to the contingencies of everyday life" (4). The contemporary tattooed body in representation thus engages its own history *through* its citation of different discourses. Pollock additionally argues that the areas between those differences are performative spaces "fertile with the possibility of both reviewing and revising history" (5). Performative representations therefore become resistant when their form and content cites a discursive history that opens up, rather than closes down, difference. By looking how the body engages its own history, therefore, I am attempting to analyze the performativity of its performances along the lines suggested by Gingrich-Philbrook and Gould.

Limitations

This study is limited in that it traces the genealogy of very specific and narrowly limited texts. The three texts under consideration fall into three sites of cultural production: tattoo conventions, advertising, and neo-tribalism books. I seek to explain how these very specific texts construct the tattooed bodies they represent and how those specific representations acquire meaning. Moreover, the study only examines visual representations. There are, of course, other sites of cultural production that I do not address. Specifically, this study does not analyze film, tattoo magazines, tattoo web sites, or everyday interaction. I do not mean to suggest that these are insignificant contexts. Rather, I merely want to indicate that this study is necessarily limited in scope.

An additional limitation is that each chapter is driven by a very specific and narrowly defined discussion of the discourse to which it attends. In other words, my purpose is not to write the history of gender, class, exoticism, and the tattooed body; nor is it to draw any general theoretical conclusions about gender, class, or the production of the cultural exotic. Rather, I am concerned only with how those discourses intersect with interpretations of tattooed bodies in representation, and how those specific interpretations are revised and resisted via the construction and representation of the tattooed body in the texts. Throughout the analysis I attempt to avoid making the interpretive error of ignoring the inevitable connections between gender, class, and the exotic. I am afraid, however, that some of those intersections are less apparent than others.

A final limitation has to do with the scope of each chapter's genealogy. As Roach suggests, the process of surrogation invites a multiplicity of interpretations. The possible historical citations and revisions are, therefore, potentially as wide as the scope of history. Moreover, because there is never any temporally definitive original to which any one cultural performance refers, the length of each genealogical trail could be as long as human history. Lastly, each representation could be potentially a surrogate of multiple prior performances that would, of course, lead to diverse conclusions about the nature of the surrogation. As a result, the nature of the method, as Roach suggests, depends upon the problematic procedures of "spectating and tattling" (Cities of the Dead 30). What one sees is always contingent upon one's spatial, temporal, and experiential relationship to that which is given to be seen. Perhaps this is a blessing in disguise, however, for the truly complete genealogy would be the infinite one.

Issues and Organization

The three analytical chapters that follow highlight the discourses of class, gender, and exoticism respectively. I position each discourse as an interpretive launching point for the analysis of specific texts while simultaneously striving to attend to the inevitable intersection among class, gender, and exoticism. Each chapter also selects a specific site of cultural production, or narrowly delimited site, as its point of critical departure. The choice of these sites is based upon two issues: form of representation and the relationship between cultural producer and audience. In the first case, I desire to analyze both live and mediated representational strategies in order to compare the potential of the live body in representation to that of the illustrated or

photographed body. In the second case, the goal is to analyze representations produced by the tattoo community for the tattoo community, representations produced by the mass media for a general audience, and representations produced by the tattoo community for a general audience. This emphasis on the producers and consumers is motivated by the argument that production and consumption are critical factors in the process of representation.[12]

Class

There has recently been a reevaluation of the importance of the body in terms of the analysis of class in social theory (Turner 11). Class, according to Bourdieu, is materialized in/on the body and acted out through the body in the form of "everything the body ingests and digests and assimilates" (417). Interpretations of the body are normalized through class codes. While it is an artificial distinction to divorce class from gender or race, it is worthwhile to identify the particular class codes enacted by the body so as to understand how those codes intersect with those of gender and race to form the social body. Chapter Two, therefore, foregrounds class with an analysis of the tattooed body in live performance at the Southern Comfort Tattoo Expo (Tattoo Voodoo), arguing that this venue and the performances occurring within it resurrect the traditions of sideshow performances.

Class is particularly important to the understanding of the tattooed body. In his discussion of tattooing in Victorian Britain, for example, Bradley argues that tattoos reproduce class and status upon the surface of the body; they demonstrate the production and reproduction of class upon the body (155). Moreover, one of the

defining aspects of the so-called tattoo renaissance is the shift in the economic background of the consumer (Sanders, Customizing the Body 29).[13] Within the tattoo community there is an increasingly notable class stratification as a result of both the influx of a middle-class clientele and the drive in some sectors of the tattoo community to define tattooing as an art form (Fleming 61).

In her analysis of the discursive construction of the tattoo community through tattoo magazines and literature, Margo DeMello indicates, furthermore, that the tattoo community is "stratified by class and status" and is currently "largely defined by elite tattooists and tattoo magazine publishers who are primarily from the middle class" (Bodies of Inscription 3).[14] The result of this "middle-class repackaging" of the tattoo has been, DeMello argues, a process that "seeks to erase its white, working-class beginnings in this country" (Bodies of Inscription 3). DeMello's analysis pays particular attention to the distinction between the "golden age" of tattooing and what she calls the "new text" which has been created since the 1960s. She pays homage to the practice of displaying tattooed bodies in the early century but does not trace the links between that history and interpretations of the classed position of the tattooed body. I think this is an important interpretive move to make because, as Cassuto indicates, the tattoo restricts the social mobility of its wearer because class status is marked and permanent (240). In other words, the presence of the body in action in the world needs to be read with and against these narrative constructions. How do contemporary performances both cite new *and* old texts and, consequently, performatively enact cultural transmission of class norms?

DeMello also suggests that tattoos hold class symbolism when she argues that one of the reasons that women with tattoos are stigmatized is because they are an affront to bourgeois sensibilities ("The Carnivalesque Body" 79). Class for the tattooed body is tied to display and performance. Tattoos are only an affront, in other words, when they are seen. The class of a tattooed person is performed through physical display of class-coded markings. This analysis queries how the performance of the tattooed body both creates and regulates class norms.[15]

Gender

As scholars have become increasingly aware, largely due to the influence of feminist scholars like Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva and Simone de Beauvior, the body is always a gendered body. As a result of this awareness, much scholarly attention has been paid to gender in both the social and natural sciences.[16] Turner notes, for example, that gender now figures much more prominently in the understanding of social classification (10-11). The tattooed body is also, therefore, constructed by the normative constraints of gender. Chapter Three foregrounds gender with an analysis of the tattooed body as constructed in the 1999-2000 Rosie the Riveter print advertising campaign for Tampax. I argue that this advertisement cites the history of a Rosie the Riveter war poster and the 1950s Marlboro Man advertising campaign. I then position the Tampax advertisement within the contemporary context of tattooed bodies in advertising through an analysis of a Sony PlayStation advertisement. I argue that the Tampax advertisement's gendered meaning is both produced and constrained by the discourses surrounding the Marlboro and PlaySation campaigns.

For the purposes of this analysis gender is a set of normative parameters realized and defined through action. Despite the conflict in gender scholarship between those who argue for the social constructedness of the body and those who cling to biological difference as that which divides man from woman, there is a growing acceptance that gender, as distinct from sex, is a social construction and not a biological imperative. Treating gender as a social construction means that "our identities are a fluid assemblage of the meanings and behaviors that we construct from the values, images, and prescriptions we find in the world around us" (Kimmel, The Gendered Society 87). One's gender is neither unchanging nor is it context free. Gender is situational, relational, and always social and historical (Kimmel, The Gendered Society 90).

Moreover, gender is realized through interpretations of action. Gender is attributed interpretively to behaviors that we see and perceive. Judith Butler refers to the manifestation of gender through action as gender performativity. Butler argues that gender is not something that is imposed upon the natural body but rather is something that is created and understood though discourse and is part of what decides the subject (Bodies That Matter x). Gender is not merely a role that we can flippantly manipulate by changing our clothes but is a result of the power of discourse to bring about that which it names and made manifest in the actions of bodies (Bodies That Matter x, 2). To study gender, therefore, "requires that we locate individual identity within a historically and socially specific and equally gendered place and time, and that we situate the individual within the complex matrix of our lives, our bodies and our social and cultural environments" (Kimmel, The Gendered Society 95).

A significant body of scholarly writing about tattooing looks at the relationship between gender and tattoos.[17] This research is largely concerned with both the motivations and experiences of women becoming tattooed prior to and during the tattoo renaissance, as well as with how the female tattooed body is viewed, given the traditionally masculine coding of tattooing in the United States. Tattoos have been characterized, consequently, as a means for women to control and contest norms of femininity by co-opting a signifying practice that has been traditionally coded as masculine.[18] On the other hand, Guests's analysis of representations of the tattooed body within the context of eighteenth century Britain and its perception of the South Pacific attends to the construction of masculinity and femininity in the form and content texts such as the portrait of Omai, an extensively tattooed man from Raiatea who arrived in England on one of James Cook's vessels (83-101). Guest argues that tattoos in these representations (as a result of the social discourse circulating at the time) "mark the intersections of discourses of the exotic and domestic, and of gender difference" (85). I add to this line of inquiry by approaching representations of the tattooed body within the context of contemporary American gender discourse. Moreover, I am interested in how these contemporary representations attain meaning not only from their cultural context, but also through their performative citation of prior contexts. I am interested, in other words, in *how* specific representations of the tattooed body in contemporary American culture cite the norms of masculinity and femininity.

Exotic

Since the publication of Edward Said's Orientalism, the issue of Western appropriation of non-western culture and cultural imagery through the process and discourse of exoticism has risen to scholarly prominence. Moreover, as Guest's research initially indicates, the social construction of the non-Western "other" as "exotic" is important to understanding representations of the tattooed body. The representational process of exoticism is, consequently, the third discourse this study discusses. In Chapter Four, I foreground exoticism by analyzing Modern Primitives, Return of the Tribal, and The Customized Body. These volumes combine illustrations, photographs, and written text in order to create the tattooed body's "modern primitive" or "neo-tribal" identity. I suggest that these texts seek to rescue tattooing from its deviant history and, in so doing, displace and erase much of the history of tattooing in the U.S.

Definitions of what constitutes the "exotic" vary. Longley suggests, for example, that the exotic is a cultural object or "special form" defined by "popular notions of fascination and desire: the desire to enter forbidden territory, whether in the imagination or physically, to partake of otherness and stake a claim"(23). Carbonell adds that exoticism is the process of reductive displacement by which strangeness is "enacted by difference that stands in as a representation for the whole" (52). The exotic, consequently, is both an object viewed as exotic and a performance of otherness that produces that object's exotic effect.

The locus of disagreement among cultural critics dwells between the position that Western fascination with the exotic expresses the power of Western hegemony to colonize the cultural "other" via cultural appropriation, and the stance advocating the exotic's disruptive potential. According to Santaolalla, some cultural critics argue that the Western fascination with the exotic appropriates the meaning of a culture by decontextualizing the cultural artifact or ritual (9). The effect of such appropriation, according to this point of view, is a violent homogenization of culture casting the West as the aggressor. In Edward Said's influential Orientalism, for example, the West relentlessly disempowers Eastern culture: "The Oriental is depicted as something one judges (as in a court of law), something one studied and depicts (as in a curriculum), something one disciplines (as in a zoological manual). The point is that in each of these cases the Oriental is *contained* and *represented* by dominating frameworks" (40). Latrell objects to the inflexible and context-blind tendency in cultural criticism to overgeneralize from this point of view, and I concur (44). The source culture, for example, has no recourse within this framework to resist domination. The situation appears unrealistically hopeless and does not consider the "Third Space" opened up at the point of intersection between two cultures (Bhabha 37). Bhabha argues that this "in-between" space produced in the articulation (representation) of cultural difference initiates "innovative sites of collaboration" (1-2). Consequently, Bhabha calls for an approach to the representation of difference that "eludes the politics of polarity"(37).

It is at this point that the production of the exotic and performativity dovetail. Mason argues in Infelicities (so named in reference to speech act theory) that "the exotic

is the product of the work of exoticization" where it is not the "original" cultural context that is important, "but the suitability of the objects in question to assume new meaning in a new context" (3). The production of the exotic, therefore, occurs through representation as opposed to through bi-polar cultural comparison.

Recent studies of tattoos have, accordingly, addressed the issue of the exotic. In addition to Guest's work, Richard Bogdan argues that sideshow performances of the illustrated body were presented in the exotic mode (249). Moreover, popular publications since the tattoo renaissance have illustrated the influence of "tribal" tattoo designs and "tribal" practices of body modification through the rhetoric of modern primitivism and the neo-tribal (i.e. Vale and Juno, Camphausen, Polhemus). This study evaluates these popular texts in relation to the discourse of exoticism.

Each of these case studies pursues a largely deconstructive agenda. In Chapter Five, therefore, I seek to put together what I have taken apart. I return to the logic and language of the tattoo community to theorize surrogation and suggest that the tattooed body is a cultural bricoleur. In so doing, I suggest that the resistant potential of reconstructing the tattooed body in representation is tied to performative citation of multiple and transgressive discursive authorities. I also discuss the resistant potential of the body when it is not deconstructed through discursive classification strategies.

Notes

1. Acting techniques such as the use of gest, which accents a particular word or action as indicative of a general condition or attitude, for example, are part of an actor's repertoire. For further explanation see Brecht on Theatre.

2. In fact, Butler argues that resistance to norms is paradoxically enabled "if not produced" by norms (Bodies that Matter 15).

3. Foucault is more interested in the former in Discipline and Punish, focusing on the how the behavior of human beings and the interpretation of human behavior is controlled by discursive power.

4. See also Slinn 62.

5. For example, Butler provides an in depth investigation of gender and sexuality (Bodies that Matter) and Mason critiques the production of the culturally exotic (Infelicities). Also see essay anthologies edited by Case, Brett, and Foster (Cruising the Performative) and Parker and Sedgwick (Performativity and Performance).

6. Even if a tattoo is removed, the memory of the tattoo remains in the form of a scar.

7. DeMello does, however, point out that while there are a growing number of artists who are academically trained, there still exist plenty of tattoo practitioners who are old school, street vendors (92-96).

8. DeMello does not argue that "old school" tattoos, tattooists and tattoo collectors have disappeared, however. Her point is that the rhetoric of the media has attempted to erase the significance of the "old school" in an effort to create a community identity which is middle class.

9. Throughout DeMello's study, she uses the terms classic, traditional, working class, and old school to refer to tattooing as a practice as it was done practically and artistically prior to the 1960's in the US.

10. This argument is based largely upon Peggy Phelan's (1993) work which suggests that what is unmarked in representation (or un*re*marked) still exists within the representational framework.

11. While it is not within the scope of this project, an interesting project would be to analyze the rhetoric of the competing histories of tattooing throughout the twentieth century in America as tattooing has been rediscovered by different social groups.

12. Additionally, many of the books devoted to tattooing offer a brief historical sketch that traces the origin of tattooing, its emergence in the West, the impact of the invention of the electric tattoo gun and the key artists prior to and during the tattoo renaissance. See, for example, Krakow 15-30, Camphausen 15-24, Sanders Customizing the Body 9-20, DeMello Bodies of Inscription 44-70, Steward 173-182, Hewitt 67-74.

13. The "tattoo renaissance" is a term first coined by Arnold Rubin and describes the increase in popularity of tattooing, especially among the middle class, in the 1980's and 1990's.

14. Part of the foundation for DeMello's argument is, however, that community is a discursive construction by various tattoo publications, pamphlets, and chat rooms that exclude lower class tattooers and clients such as bikers and convicts.

15. I do not intend to suggest that these are the only discourses that are important to the performativity of the tattooed body. What I have intended is to provide a sample of discourse that is significant to the tattoo community, tattoo research and scholarship in performativity.

16. The mere volume of gender studies prevents me from constructing an adequate review. For a more thorough survey of gender related research in the social sciences see Michael Kimmel, The Gendered Society.

17. Gender is almost always mentioned in tattoo literature in terms of who the people who get tattoos are, what kind of images they choose and why they choose them. In addition to this general commentary, gender has also been the focus of tattoo scholarship. For example, see Braunberger; Mifflin; DeMello, "The Carnivalesque Body: Women and Tattoos"; Mascia-Lees and Sharpe, "The Marked and Un(re)marked: Tattoo and Gender in Theory and Narrative."

18. DeMello, for example, argues in "The Carnivalesque Body" that heavily tattooed women are viewed as contemporary freaks and pose threats to gender norms as well as violate the sanctity of the human body. She also contends, along with Mifflin, that women use tattoos as a means to assert control over their bodies as viewed by the male gaze.

CHAPTER TWO
TATTOO VOODOO AND THE SIDESHOW

On Halloween weekend in both 1999 and 2000 I attended the Southern Comfort Tattoo Expo (also known as Tattoo Voodoo) held at the Landmark Hotel in Metairie, Louisiana. The main event (as advertised in the promotional flyer) was a "live" tattoo competition, pitting the talents of the various artists, and the bodies of the competitors, against each other.[1] The context of the contest dissected the tattooed bodies on stage according to competition categories based upon body part and tattoo design. Categorizing tattooed body parts is not, however, a new phenomenon. The procedure of discursively controlling the meaning of the tattooed body by identifying it by its various parts began in the mid to late nineteenth century with the advent of criminal anthropology. Tattoo competition performances recall this history of dissecting the tattooed body in order to assert its criminality and working-class deviance because they are, in the words of Christine Braunberger, "one part freak show" (16).

Since the 1970s and the development of professional tattoo organizations such as the National Tattoo Association, tattoo conventions have become a worldwide phenomenon where tattoos, tattooing, and tattooed bodies are celebrated.[2] Tattoo enthusiasts and artists attend conventions held from New York to Los Angeles and from Tokyo to Amsterdam. Tattoo conventions are, consequently, important sites for the representation and performance of tattooed bodies for a number of reasons. Initially, as DeMello indicates, tattoo conventions constitute a space where tattooed individuals congregate for "long periods of time" (Bodies of Inscription 21). The behaviors within

and the spatial construction of tattoo conventions consequently are crucial to contemporary definitions of tattooing. As DeMello argues, tattoo conventions provide a locale for the enactment of tattoo community. Members of the tattoo community concur. For example, tattoo artist and enthusiast Madame Chinchilla views the convention as "an occasion to mix with cohorts, see and show tattoos, enter tattoo contests, go to seminars and collect a tattoo as a momento of the event. It is also an opportunity to be photographed, interviewed, and communicate on like-minded subjects" (62). Tattoo conventions provide the late twentieth-century tattoo artist and tattoo consumer with the opportunity to gather together and celebrate their bodies and art.[3] In fact, conventions have become the "central medium of cross-pollination. Artists can see what other artists are creating, either in person or through the evidence of the living flesh" (Chris Pfouts qtd. in Krakow 156). Moreover, tattoo conventions are documented and advertised on internet tattoo pages as well as in tattoo magazines.[4]

The featured event of most conventions is a tattoo competition (DeMello, Bodies of Inscription 28; Krakow 154). Tattoo competitions are venues where tattooed bodies parade across stages and have their tattoos and bodies evaluated by a judging panel normally composed of prominent tattoo artists. The contestants and the tattoos they display are evaluated based upon "their tattoos, the appearance of their bodies, and the status of the tattooist" (DeMello, Bodies of Inscription, 29). The tattoo contest is a venue within the convention that heightens the behavior of the tattooed body by placing the body on stage and before an audience for the express purpose of being evaluated as

a tattooed body.[5] The contest, consequently, is a specific representational frame that highlights the tattooed body within the convention context.

Tattoo Voodoo is no different from other conventions in terms of the content of the events held within the walls of the Mardi Gras Ballroom in the Landmark Hotel. Like most other conventions, Tattoo Voodoo hosted a tattoo contest. Tattoo Voodoo also featured a variety of seminars and social events as well as an assortment of tattoo artists practicing their art. Tattoo Voodoo is representative because it conforms to the general form of the tattoo convention in terms of organization and events.[6] Moreover, Tattoo Voodoo began its run in 1992. This convention is not an anomalous or one-time event; it has longevity and a history.

In this chapter I argue that the performances at the Tattoo Voodoo competition specifically, and of the extensively tattooed people at the convention in general, recall performances of illustrated people at sideshows. The convention performances consequently resurrect scientific discourses of classification circulating around the bodies of illustrated men and women. The contemporary body in performance at this venue was thus performatively authorized by prior discourses of physical deviance and underclass status, discourses that I will argue continued to influence the evaluation of the tattooed body's social worth throughout the twentieth century. In the end, the competition performances and the convention venue provide the tattooed body with the momentary power to subvert social class and status norms while simultaneously reinscribing those norms upon the tattoo community.

Throughout this analysis, I approach class as a performative construct. Class is both produced by the performance of the body and practices of the body are interpreted as measures of social status. Bourdieu articulates the reciprocal relationship between production and interpretation in terms of taste: "In the ordinary situations of bourgeois life, banalities about art, literature or cinema are inseparable from the steady tone, the slow, casual diction, the distant or self-assured smile, the measured gesture, the well-tailored suit and the bourgeois salon of the person who pronounces them" (410). Non-verbal behaviors are signs of social status, so it is not enough to utter the correct pithy statement unless the entire performance is intact. Moreover, because the social elite set the standards for tasteful and appropriate behavior, they guarantee their position at the top of the social hierarchy. Performances that do not conform to norms established by the upper class identify the social status of the performer as both deviant and lower class. Social performances that challenge the assumptions of upper-class social norms are, consequently, devalued as "vulgar and tasteless" (Fiske, Reading the Popular 29).

Class evaluation of the body extends beyond taste as an external symbol into the realm of the internal. Grosz indicates that society interprets norms inscribed upon the body, either literally or figuratively, as symptoms and clues of individual subjectivity (139). Bodies violating social norms therefore are interpreted as external manifestations of internal social deficiencies. Barbara Ehrenreich explains, for example, that evaluations of white working-class behaviors are based upon stereotypes that produce labels like "tacky, unhealthy, hopelessly bigoted, and parochial" (7). More than simply demonstrating economic status, therefore, class norms signify one's physical condition,

psychological well-being, and intelligence. Even if the working-class individual achieves the material means required to rise above his or her economic class, social status simply shifts from tacky and trashy to tacky and trashy with money. In their discussion of "white trash," Newitz and Wray indicate, for example, that this label "is a way of naming actually existing white people who occupy the economic and social margins of American life, and it is a set of myths and stereotypes that justify continued marginalization" (172). Economic class may be a material reality, but status is a set of behavioral norms based on stereotypical imagery measuring individual personal worth and social value.

Elements of human behavior that perform status include performance techniques such as "accent, dress, manners, and speech patterns" (Ross 3). Styles of adornment, for example, mark the body's social status and make the body culturally visible (Silverman 189). Tattoos are a unique version of adornment because they are permanent. In her explanation of Alphonso Lingus' discussion of tattooing, Elizabeth Grosz explains:

> It offends Western sensibility (at least the white, and especially middle-class sensibility, although Lingus doesn't specify this) that a subject would voluntarily undertake the permanent inscription of a verbal or visual message on its skin. Its superficiality offends us; its permanence alarms us. We are not so much surfaces as profound depths, subjects of hidden interiority, and the exhibition of subjectivity on the body's surface is, at least from a certain class and cultural perspective, "puerile" (his [Lingus'] word). (138)

Tattoos, from this point of view, represent an immature and shortsighted decision. They irresponsibly mark a "stage" that a person might be going through that s/he will eventually "grow out of" and, presumably, regret. Tattoos are a unique form of

adornment, therefore, because of their permanence. Rabine suggests that temporary styles of personal adornment, because of their impermanence and potential to be discarded, both conceal and reveal social identity (69-70). A middle-class, thirty-something business woman from the suburbs, in other words, may dress the part of a street-corner prostitute but can always return to her office and business suit. Tattoos, on the other hand, cannot be discarded at the whim of the wearer, in response to a shift in social opinion, or, as the following discussion explores, because of a change in location.[7]

As the example of the businesswoman turned street hooker suggests, there are locations that accept certain behaviors and reject others. Similarly, I argue that there are places where the tattooed body is somewhat more accepted than others. The organization of space canalizes class behavior, therefore, when the space is socially coded and constructed to encourage the presence of some bodies and to reject the intrusion of others. Sibley suggests, for example, that the structure of space and spatial relations in any given society will reflect the strength of class boundaries. Highly stratified social systems will produce spaces that have clearly delineated (strongly classified) boundaries welcoming some types of behavior and refusing others (Sibley 80). Social systems that are not as strictly stratified, however, will produce spaces that allow intermingling of social classes (Sibley 81).

In strongly classified spaces, the moving body can potentially resist spatial structure by inventing new possibilities for interaction within space that "transform or abandon spatial elements" (de Certeau 98). Weakly classified space, on the other hand,

invites the presence of multiple classes. The movement of an individual through space consequently speaks through its affirmation, transgression, respect and suspicion of the spatial organization and its implied order (de Certeau 99). Space both encourages and discourages certain types of behavior, but it is up to the individual to actualize the possibilities of the spatial order. It is, therefore, important to attend to the movement and performances of bodies within space in order to fully appreciate their performative force.

Tattooed bodies ultimately force a visual recognition of both the social construction of space and the body. The tattooed body is clearly not a blank slate. Unlike other forms of social inscription that can be hidden because they have become naturalized (the codes have become invisible), tattoos constantly confront naturalization because they represent a conscious decision to mar the pure and "natural" surface of the body. Metaphorically and literally, tattoos illustrate the inscription of social norms and codes upon the body. Class evaluations uniquely impact the tattooed body, therefore, because it remains tattooed regardless of where it is or how it is culturally evaluated. Tattoos implicate the skin, they become part of the body, and therein lies their power and the subsequent desire to regulate their meaning.

In order to articulate the importance of the tattooed body and its performative and historical context to class and status interpretations, this chapter follows two lines of analysis. I initially argue that the tattoo competition performances' kinesthetic recollection of illustrated people's style of presentation appropriates the scientific logic of physical classification popular in the late nineteenth century. In the contemporary

context, classification exalts the aesthetics of tattoo form and the skill of the artist rather than treating tattoos as signs of low-class criminality and deviance. Contemporary display on the competition stage thus inventively displaces the authority of scientific classification by manipulating its interpretive norm; classification strategies turn the tattoo into something to celebrate as opposed to denigrate. Within the tattoo community, however, the valorization of tattooing's artistic form precipitates internal class stratification.

Secondly, I argue that the tattoo convention's spatial configuration refers to the social organization of space at sideshow venues and their position in/on the threshold of society. Both historic and contemporary performances are situated within a highly classified organization of social space that permits the inversion of status hierarchies through the destabilizing force of the weakly classified threshold. The tattoo convention behavioral vortex produces a context, therefore, where the tattooed and deviant body is celebrated and the non-tattooed body is out of place. This inversion is, however, contingent upon contextually specific spatial and temporal conditions.

Status and the Tattooed Body

Tattoo competitions evaluate the body based on classification schemes similar to scientific physical classification systems popular late in the nineteenth century. Instead of identifying the tattoo as a sign of deviance, however, the competition transfigures it into a symbol of artistry. Tattoo competition bodies consequently co-opt and inventively displace the rhetoric of classification that denigrated the tattooed body at the turn of the century. The following analysis articulates the kinesthetic connections

between Tattoo Voodoo performers and illustrated men and women, describes the turn-of-the-century evaluation of the illustrated body, and argues that the late-century performances simultaneously displace the oppressive force of scientific classification as well as reinscribe its logic within the tattoo community.

Tattoo Voodoo takes place annually in the Mardi Gras ballroom located on the lobby level of the Landmark Hotel. The ballroom is situated to the right as you enter the hotel. Its location is clearly visible from the main entrance and indicated by a sign. The tattoo competition at Tattoo Voodoo in both 1999 and 2000 took place on a stage at the rear of the Mardi Gras ballroom. At the back of the stage stood a table that displayed the trophies that would be presented to the victorious. The three extensively tattooed judges of the event sat at a table to the right of the stage. The tattoo competition entrants stood outside the building through an exit door immediately to the right of the judges' table. An M.C. with microphone in one hand and a clipboard in the other would announce the category, the name of the artist, the name and location of the artist's studio, and the name of the person whose body was the canvas for the artwork. When his or her name was called, the tattooed contest participant would proceed to the table of judges. At the judging table, the tattoo was presented to the judges for inspection. The judges would scan the tattoo, jot some notes down on paper, and then nod to the M.C. to call the next entrant. The performance of the tattooed person in the tattoo contest was both in homage to the artist's prior performance, and in honor of the tattoo collector. Artistic skill and aesthetic form of the tattoo art were evaluated and the prize awarded to the tattoo collector and tattoo artist. The tattoo competition combined

the aesthetics of a fashion show with that of an art gallery. Competitors became models because their skin was the artist's canvas.

The men in the competition generally wore t-shirts, tank tops, or were shirtless with jeans or cut-off jeans shorts. They ranged in age from twenty-something to sixty-something. The women displayed more variety of attire, wearing anything from black leather pants and halter-tops to cut-off jeans and t-shirts. What was not common for the men was any version of pressed khaki and tucked-in, button-down, cotton shirts. The women's styles, while not so easily described in detail, tended to be either jeans and t-shirt casual or leopard-skin fantastic. In all cases, the clothing worn on stage conspicuously revealed the tattoo in competition. For example, the woman on stage wearing shiny black leather pants and a red, tied around the neck, spaghetti-strap halter-top was featuring a large dragonfly tattooed on her back that stretched below her waistline. The full tattoo was visible because there were no straps on her back and her pants rested low on her hips.[8]

The tattoo competition separated tattoo styles into categories delineated by artistic style and body part. The following list of categories is an excerpt from the Tattoo Voodoo 2000 program:

> LIVE TATTOO COMPETITION
>
> The live tattoo competition will be judged by a panel of highly qualified tattoo artists. All contest winners will receive a first place trophy. The artist will receive a certificate of merit.
> There is an entrance fee for the live tattoo competition. This is to defray costs and to keep it serious.

CONTEST CATEGORIES

Best color tattoo	Best black & grey
Most realistic/portrait	Best Full Back
Best front panel	Best Native American
Most unique theme	Best tribal
Best overall male	Best overall female
Best sleeve	Best single piece
Best tattoo of the show	Best booth

Competition categories highlight style, form, content, and location of the tattoo.[9] When the tattooed contestants presented their tattoo(s) to the judging panel, therefore, it was in a manner emphasizing the tattooed body part. Depending on the location of the tattoo, this either required a high degree of physical exposure (the man whose penis was the canvas, for example) or the skill of a contortionist (for example, the woman who lifted her heel onto the table and then turned her body and leg to show the tattoo that wrapped around her ankle and extended up her calf). Once the judging was complete, the person proceeded to the stage to exhibit the tattoo first to the photographer waiting up-stage, and then to the convention attendees who had gathered around the stage area.

The norm was for the individual to walk to center stage and stand passively in a pose that allowed the audience to see the tattoo entered in the competition. It was the tattoo, and not the tattooed body, that was the focal point of this performance.[10] For example, a man with a tattoo on his throat threw his head back, another gentleman whose calf-tattoo was featured placed that leg in front of him and bent his knee so that his leg pivoted on pointed toe, and a woman who was revealing a tattoo in her pubic region unzipped her pants just far enough to display the artwork. The performance was a display of body parts. The parade of legs, arms, chests, backs, necks, pubic areas, and

even penises continued until all entrants had crossed the stage. This tattoo classification system virtually dissected the human body for tattoo inspection.

The conventions of display within this event in particular and at the convention in general established physical exposure and exhibition as the norm. As tattoo artist, author and enthusiast, Madame Chinchilla notes: "The attire is provocative; ovals and designs are cut out of clothing to show-off tattoos"(62). Or, as Krakow describes, "there's usually a fair amount of tasteful nudity" (155). Throughout the convention, it was also not unusual to see people pulling and tugging at clothing items to reveal tattoos on stomachs, backs, and upper thighs. Clothing that partially revealed and partially concealed tattoos was shoved aside so the viewer could get a full view of the design. Not all convention attendees were wearing revealing clothing, of course, but the norms of physical display certainly encouraged exhibition. As Braunberger's analysis of tattoo conventions suggests, the "exhibitionist melancholy to share one's tattoo" is eased and "strangers touch each other as they admire tattoos, they tug clothing away; most wear little to begin with" (16). Tattoo conventions are safe havens where tattoo artists and tattoo collectors gather together to compare tattooing techniques and show-off their tattoos.

In the following interpretation of tattoo conventions, I argue that this parade of tattooed bodies featuring tattooed body parts on the stage at Tattoo Voodoo, as well as the trend towards physical exhibition among those not entered into competition, physically rehearses the style of presentation of illustrated men and women at the turn

of the nineteenth into the twentieth century when the exhibition of the tattooed body was reaching its peak of popularity in the United States.

The style of performance of the entrants in the tattoo competition has its beginnings on the sideshow stage, resurrecting performance styles begun at the turn of the century. The first kinesthetic recollection of sideshow performers is the tattoo competition's evaluation of the tattoo as a sign of the skill of the tattoo artist. The tattoo, within this context, is the record of the artist's performance of his/her craft. Similarly, the performance of the tattooed freak was, in many ways, already accomplished before the actual exhibition of the body as a product was put on display. As Hammer and Basker indicate, the "appeal of the tattooed freak was the ability to withstand pain and bizarre acts of mutilation. The tattooed performer appeared as one who had defied pain, not in one great gesture (like a nail in the nose) but in a thousand acts of bodily violation" (36). In the early sideshow tents it was not necessary for illustrated people to do much of anything because their bodies were the physical evidence of the event already accomplished and endured; they were living picture galleries. The actual physical performance of the tattooed person achieved meaning because the images etched upon their body provided evidence verifying the truth of the often fictional narratives surrounding the acquisition of the tattoos.[11]

According to Richard Bogdan, for example, "Captain Costentenus" was P.T. Barnum's first illustrated man, and his performance is generally characteristic of early displays of illustrated people. Costentenus wore his hair curled and braided and fastened to the top of his head, wore a loincloth, a diamond ring and chain-smoked

cigarettes (Bogdan 247). Fellow circus performer Robert Sherwood's account additionally suggests that the Captain stripped down to the loincloth during the performance: "the temperature under a wet circus top in the early spring is sometimes of such a nature as to make a well-clothed man shiver; how much worse, then, if one had to strip a dozen times a day to semi-nakedness" (151). Unlike other sideshow exhibits, which either performed tasks one might assume could not be done by a person with their particular disability (armless individuals painting, for example) or engaged in more standard show business (singing, dancing, piano playing), the illustrated person merely had to sit or stand nearly nude upon the stage (Bogdan 104-110). It was not, consequently, the animated body that was of interest. Instead, the illustrated exhibit was a combination of painted body parts on display.

Performances of illustrated women followed similar conventions of display. The fundamental difference was that these women were not only violating general norms for proper physical exposure, they were trouncing upon Victorian limits of what was deemed acceptable for women. The following description in the New York Times of Irene Woodward's March 18, 1882, appearance at The Sinclair House demonstrates both the style of performance and the norms violated:

> During a reception of three hours at The Sinclair House yesterday afternoon she was attired in a scant costume of black velvet and gold. A close-fitting bodice or jacket, trimmed with gold bullion and fringe, surmounted a pair of trunks whose long golden fringe stopped an inch or two above the knee. . .The visitors were permitted to look upon the quaintly decorated skin of the upper portions of the chest and back, the arms and the exposed portions of the lower limbs. Miss Woodward remarked that she felt a little bashful about being looked at that way, never having worn the costume in the presence of men before. (qtd. in Mifflin 12)

Woodward was merely required to sit and be gazed upon because she was wearing so little. Illustrated people, at least until the 1920s, simply showed their skin.[12] This mode of presentation was clearly re-enacted by many of the entrants in the tattoo competition at the Tattoo Expo. The men and women on the stage, like their early century cohorts, were there to model their tattoos, not because they were expected to *do* anything at all. In both the context of the sideshow and the tattoo competition, the tattoo is evidence of a prior performance. In the context of the tattoo contest, however, the tattoo is recoded as a mark of status, not of freakishness. In the late-century context, the entrant into the tattoo competition is living evidence of the skill of the tattoo artist and the aesthetics of the body. In a very compelling sense, the late twentieth-century body at Tattoo Voodoo is a human picture gallery transformed into an art gallery.

The individual performances of a few of the tattoo competitors, however, violated this behavioral norm. For example, a slender auburn-haired woman wearing a scant bikini top and cut-off jean shorts stood center stage to display the tattoos covering her upper chest, arms and back. She stood facing the crowd with her arms flexed in a pose featuring her biceps. She then slowly rotated her torso so that her back was to the audience before facing us again with a small, almost bashful, smile. At this point the largely male crowd went wild with catcalls. The man who followed this performance, not to be outdone, jiggled his tattoo decorated beer belly and was rewarded with applause and laughter.

Prior to this animation, the tattooed body on stage conformed to the performance norm established by its early-century counterparts. The focal point of the performance

was the art etched upon the body part. The skin of the stomach, for example, was merely a canvas for the tattoo prior to the jiggle. Once the man moved, however, the canvas transformed into a beer belly and the audience reacted to the carnivally grotesque display instead of to the tattoo art. Much like photographs of tattoos that center the tattoo in the frame and sever the remainder of the body (somewhat like surgical blankets de-personalize the patient by framing the incision point and masking the rest of the body), the context of the tattoo competition framed the body part and attempted to erase the person. But, as Judith Butler argues:

> [B]odies never quite comply with the norms by which their materialization is impelled. Indeed, it is the instabilities, the possibilities for rematerialization, opened up by this process that mark one domain in which the force of the regulatory law can be turned against itself to spawn rearticulations that call into question the hegemonic force of that very regulatory law. (Bodies that Matter 2)

When the tattooed body on stage moved, it actualized its potential to disrupt the controlling influence of the behavioral norm of display; the body talked back. The effect of this disruption forced the audience to remember that they were staring at people and not inanimate works of art. Moreover, the jiggle of the beer belly and the laughter it generated self-reflexively poked fun at the serious tone set by the organizers of the event. The result not only broke the frame of body as art gallery, but also asked the convention attendees to laugh at themselves and their effort to conform to norms of appropriate behavior imposed from outside the tattoo community. The limitation of the contextual frame of the tattoo competition was unable, therefore, to suppress the resistant potential of movement always present in the living human body.

Tattoo competition categories also rehearse the cultural performance of the freak show. The illustrated sideshow performer was, however, subject to scientific, as opposed to artistic, scrutiny. With the general advent of the social sciences, the arrival of criminal anthropology, and the increasing to desire to classify and categorize abnormalities, turn of the century freaks were increasingly under medical and scientific investigation as examples of deviance and abnormalcy rather than fantastic specimens of wonder and awe (Bogdan 62-66). For example, upon witnessing the body of Captain Costentenus, Dr. Kaposi, a professor at the University of Vienna, suggested in 1872 that "it would be desirable to form a committee consisting of specialists" in the disciplines of "medicine, ethnography, linguistics, art, and perhaps also archaeology" together with "anatomists, zoologists, dermatologists and surgeons who would be competent to examine and make a scientific study of the skin of the tattooed man Captain Costentenus" (qtd. in S. Gilbert 141). Bodies in competition venues, be they beauty pageants or the Mr. Olympia contest, suffer the scrutiny of expert panels deemed qualified to determine their worth. The authority of Tattoo Voodoo's panel of experts depends upon this tradition.

A defining characteristic of the evaluation process is the production of body part categories. In fact, Kaposi's own evaluation of Costentenus reads much like a catalogue (or the Tattoo Voodoo program):

> On the rest of his body I counted 386 of the larger figures, which, if one included the figures on his forehead, make a total of 388. These are distributed on the various regions of his body as follows:
> chest 50
> left arm 51
> right arm 50

back	37
neck	8
hips and pelvis	52
penis	1
legs	137
forehead	2
total	388

(qtd. in S. Gilbert 142)

The scientific community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century discursively dissected the tattooed body. Furthermore, the tattooed parts were coded as forensic evidence of delinquency. The influence of Cesare Lombroso was integral to constructing the association between tattooing and criminality (Bogdan 249). Lombroso "engaged in cataloguing physical characteristics which were supposed to signify mental disability, mental illness, immorality and criminality" (Sibley 25). According to Bogdan, Lombroso argued that tattoos "were the stigmata of a distinct different form of human, the 'criminal man'" (249). The body part catalogue was, consequently, the criminal anthropologist's effort to represent the body parts of a tattooed person as documentation of the social depravity of tattooed people. The tattoo, consequently, came to be a sign of deviance.

Alan Govenar indicates that the increasing attention by the anthropological and social scientific communities late in the nineteenth-century additionally produced a series of tattoo studies (Introduction xviii). Some of these projects merely sought to quantify the popularity of tattooing within specific communities (particularly the Navy), while others desired to verify the claimed connection between tattooing and social deviance and delinquency. The tattooed body itself was coded as an enactment of

primitive, lower class, and criminal behaviors. The exterior of the tattooed body was, to borrow from Bakhtin, consummated and finalized as a lower class form by the gaze of the scientific community.[13]

Mary Douglas explains this process as an attempt to make order out of an untidy situation (4). The body that does not conform to norms of physical homogeneity and behavioral control is constructed as deviant in order for society to maintain a sense of order and to assert control. In Purity and Danger, Douglas articulates these issues in terms of purity and pollution. She argues that purity is associated with that which is clean, controlled, unmarked and healthy. Polluted and, consequently, devalued and lower-classed bodies are unruly and marked. Within a hierarchical system of social classification, therefore, the pure, clean, and controlled body that is "naturally" unmarked or marred occupies the preferred position. Conversely, the physical body that is disorderly and physically marred or marked is socially constructed as devalued and deviant. Social class is assigned to a body, therefore, by how its performance enacts social norms of purity or pollution. Within the context of late nineteenth-century U.S. culture, physical exposure and conspicuous self-display accordingly became signs of lower-class delinquency.[14]

The legacy of scientific evaluations continued into the middle of the twentieth century. Sanders indicates that by this time "tattooing was firmly established as a definedly deviant practice in the public mind" and that the "tattoo was a symbolic poke-in-the-eye directed at those who were law-abiding, hard-working, family-oriented, and stable" (Customizing the Body 18). Additionally, tattoos became increasingly

associated with low class, marginal and unconventional subcultural groups (Sanders, Customizing the Body 18). Bikers, convicts, whores, and gang members are only a few of the groups associated most strongly with tattooing between 1920 and 1960. Samuel Steward's (a.k.a. Phil Sparrow) ethnographic narrative of his experience as a tattoo practitioner in Chicago and Oakland from 1950-1965, for example, characterizes tattoo clientele under the headings: "The Fleet's In" (102), "City Boys, Ex-Cons, and Juvenile Delinquents" (112), and "Lovely Ladies, Tramps, Dykes, and Farm Wives" (127). Although he warns against the dangers of generalization, Steward also characterizes his clientele as largely belonging to the "disadvantaged strata of American society" who had to be handled with "inventive diplomacy" and were, except for the sailors, "not very clean" (94-95).

Another factor perpetuating the classification of tattoos as deviant in the mid-twentieth century was an outbreak of hepatitis in the 1950s and early 1960s. As a disease transmitted by infected needles, the spread of hepatitis became associated with the procedure of tattooing, especially because the local tattooist was usually not considered the most hygienic individual nor was he or she generally located in the best part of town (Mifflin 38; Krakow 27). The disease consequently had two significant impacts on the public perception of tattooing. Initially, it enhanced tattooing's tawdry reputation because it became a dirty, unhygienic practice associated with illness (Krakow 28). Secondly, as a consequence of the disease tattooing was banned in some states. Margo Mifflin argues that these bans cemented tattooing's association with deviance because they constructed tattooing as an "outlaw" practice (38). Mifflin's

position is consistent with David Matza's argument that a ban on a practice "virtually guarantees that further disaffiliation with convention" will occur (148). It seems that Matza and Mifflin have a point because as late as 1990, American Family Physician published an article arguing that finding a tattoo during a physical exam should alert the doctor to the possibility of an underlying psychiatric condition (Raspa and Cusack 1481).

The very articulation of the tattooed body as deviant, however, potentially places it in a position to confront that which is normal or not deviant. The performance of deviance violates or exceeds the norm and, in so doing, undoes the norm's controlling influence (Butler, Bodies that Matter 10). The potential for pollution, to use Mary Douglas' rhetoric, can never be fully controlled and so the effort to contain or purify is continuous. The mechanism used to manage the tattooed body's social status and erase its legitimacy has been the discourse of classification. Tattoo competition categories receive authority from this discourse, it is the norm for body evaluation, and so produce the tattooed body as a text given for evaluation. In its reiteration of the norm, however, the competition also displaces the authority of the discourse. The new context of the tattoo convention appropriates classification and transforms it into privilege. In this venue, tattoos are no longer marks polluting the natural body; they are works of art.

When the tattoo competition utilizes classification discourse to confront the logic of class evaluation, tattoos become example of Hebdige's concept of style as resistance. Hebdige indicates that style as resistance is performed when subcultures interrupt the process of normalization and is constituted by "gestures, movements

towards a speech which offends the 'silent majority', which challenges the principle of unity and cohesion, which contradicts the myth of consensus" (18). The ideology hidden in norms of style constructed by the upper and ruling classes is, Hebdige suggests, exposed by subcultural styles that violate and manipulate those norms. When the tattoo competition uses the discourse of body part classification to positively evaluate tattoos, the power relations implicit within the discourse shift to favor the deviant body.

Not only does the classified body hold the seat of privilege, but classification discourse is also manipulated by the body that it was once exerted upon. Within the tattoo contest, for example, the authority who evaluates and categorizes the tattooed body is also tattooed. The "expert" in this case is not a representative of the scientific community, but a judging panel composed of tattoo artists who are themselves tattooed. The culturally deviant body is not, therefore, judged based on norms developed by the "normal" community but by other deviants according to their internal community standards. Upper-class appearance norms are still violated by the body's display, but the process of using classification discourse to evaluate the violation as unnatural or deviant is subverted. The competition venue successfully adapts the oppressive discourse of classification for its own ends, thus using the logic of the norm to subvert the norm.

The tattooed body, in this framework, is not a carnivalesque or parodic inversion of privilege that pokes fun at the norm, however.[15] Instead, the performance frame of the categorized competition appropriates (as opposed to parodically inverts) discourse.

The same normative logic that was used to stigmatize the tattooed body authorizes its liberation from the norm. The context of the convention enables the classified body to resist the scientific discourse (displace its authority) by performatively using and adapting that very discourse as a technique of privileged representation.[16] As a result, the tattoo competition body adopts classification as privilege rather than deviance thus resisting the controlling influence of the discourse.

This new discourse of tattoo as art form, however, also produces another less liberating performative effect. The attempt to align tattooing with high status culture stratifies the tattoo community into high and low class categories. In her insightful and thorough analysis of the discursive construction of community and class by and among tattoo artists and collectors, Margo DeMello argues, for example, that:

> Terms such as "biker," "sailor," or "scratcher" are used in tattoo magazines and articles on tattooing to refer to working-class tattoo practices that are said to be outmoded and are differentiated from newer practices defined as "professional" or "fine art." These are all status terms that mask class differences within the supposedly egalitarian tattoo community. (Bodies of Inscription 5-6)

The effect of the effort to transform the tattooed body part from a symbol of deviance into a work of art recreates class distinctions inside the subculture while it resists those same divisions imposed upon it from outside. Resistance through discourse appropriation is, therefore, limited because the shift in power relations is not comprehensive; the ideological logic of classification as a means to create status distinctions still holds some authority, and that authority is exercised within the community. In disrupting mainstream cultural norms, the artistic tattooed body simultaneously replicates their logic within the tattoo community.

Threshold Space and the Context of Display

The events and performances taking place within the tattoo convention venue kinesthetically remember freak-show and sideshow performances. All of these performances, of course, occur within distinct spatial contexts. In many ways the performances of the bodies define the site of performance. At the same time, however, the site of the performance also regulates the movement and evaluation of the body. In the following analysis I argue that the spatial relations enacted at the site of Southern Comfort Tattoo Expo reproduce the social marginalization of popular entertainments and entertainers. The new context, however, displaces the authority within the space to the marginalized body. The tattooed body is at the center and the non-tattooed body rests in/at the margin. As a result, the vortex of the convention venue inverts the position of social privilege. Moreover, this inversion produces a site where norms of behavior are upended. As Braunberger clearly states: "These events are tattoo safe-havens where the social rules governing bodies change" (16).

The Southern Comfort Tattoo Expo in both 1999 and 2000 was held on the outskirts of New Orleans in the suburb of Metairie. The convention ballroom is on the lobby level in the hotel, and the entrance is clearly marked and visible from the main entrance. In order to enter the ballroom, therefore, the exposition attendee first crosses through the lobby. This lobby area, typical of most hotels in the U.S., is an open area populated by hotel guests in various states of transition: people checking in and out of the hotel, waiting to meet friends, and coming in and out of the Tattoo Expo, the elevators, and the hotel bar.

The entrance to the Expo was marked by another series of entryways. The first point of entry was under a sign announcing: "Welcome To The Southern Comfort Tattoo Expo." In 1999 this sign was flanked by two life-sized cardboard pirate sentries fully regaled with eye patches, swords, and treasure chests. The ticket table was located just inside this entryway and it, too, was flanked by sentries in the form of a security guard on the right and the ticket takers on the left.

As I passed between the pirates in 1999, the soundscape of the tattoo convention became audible and, anxious to enter and unaware of the price for admission, I began to walk toward the sound and the doorway to the ballroom. A t-shirt and jeans clad man with an earpiece and walkie-talkie stood immediately in my way and grabbed my wrist. He was looking, I soon discovered, for the neon band that would grant me entrance. I was turned back to the table I hadn't noticed before and, without instruction, I became rapidly aware that I was not to be let in unless I paid. Eager to make up for my mistake, I tried to attract the attention of the women in charge of the ticket table. This proved a more difficult task than I would have thought. I first tried to make eye contact, thinking that they had noticed the security guard rebuffing me. I then performed the passive aggressive clearing-of-the-throat strategy. Feeling increasingly uncomfortable because of my own ineptitude and the seeming lack of interest on the part of the ticket vendors, I began to worry that I would never make it into the ballroom. I decided to become more assertive and so I spoke: "Excuse me, how much does it cost to get in?" The woman on the left looked up at me from her conversation and gestured at the notice of prices on the table with a move that seemed to say, "Are you blind or just stupid?" Blushing

(although I wondered why I felt as if I were at fault), I groped in my purse for money and handed her the ten dollar one-day admission price. She took the money and I waited for the wristband. I stood awkwardly for a moment as she returned to her conversation without giving me another thought. I slowly approached the waiting security guard, armed with the knowledge that I had paid, even if I had no wristband to prove it. As I prepared myself for a confrontation, he rewarded me with the magical band (but not until I had offered the incorrect wrist), and I was *in*.

Once my ticket was purchased, wristband attached, and program collected I entered a vending area that marked the interior lobby of the Expo. Vendors sold back issues of tattoo magazines, jewelry, t-shirts, food, and alcohol. On the other side of the vendors area was the entry to the ballroom proper where the tattoo artists, piercers, and tattoo equipment vendors were located.

The inside world of Tattoo Voodoo was the Mardi Gras ballroom. The ballroom is a long, red-carpeted, glass-chandeliered rectangular room. Booths were set up along three walls and down the center of the ballroom. The competition stage occupied most of the fourth wall. Each booth was about eight feet by six feet and some hosted one artist/studio and others were shared by two artists/studios. Each booth had a table separating the interior of the booth from the walkways. Inside the booths the artists were talking to each other and to the potential customers and other artists meandering by, drawing and performing tattooing. The back wall of each booth was usually decorated with a large poster or cloth mural of artwork and the name of the studio and/or artist(s). Adding definition to the aura of the space was the background hum of

tattoo machines, classic rock music, voices in conversation, and an occasional announcement over the sound system (usually reminding attendees and participants of contest entry deadlines). The stale haze of cigarette smoke hung like a silent fog.

The line demarcating the inside space of the convention and the outside area of the hotel lobby was very distinct. This construction of boundaries created by the series of entryways marking passage from the hotel lobby to the ballroom clearly established the lobby as exterior and the ballroom as interior. These boundaries suggest that the convention is a strongly classified space. As Sibley indicates, clear spatial boundaries reflect clear class boundaries. Boundaries produce areas where behaviors are deemed appropriate or inappropriate and admit or exclude bodies based upon their performance: "Difference in a strongly classified and strongly framed assemblage would be seen as deviance and a threat to the power structure. In order to minimize or counter the threat of pollution, spatial boundaries would be strong and there would be a consciousness of boundaries and spatial order" (Sibley 80). At the convention, tattooed bodies represented the realm of the inside and non-tattooed bodies circulated along the periphery or outside. The ticket-booth regulated the flow of bodies. This desire to create bright-line distinctions that include and exclude specific people and behaviors is a clear reflection of the spatial logic and social context of the sideshow. Historical authority is inventively displaced, however, to favor the marginalized as opposed to normalized body. Before returning to this point, however, I must revisit the sideshow.

The sensory experience of the convention ballroom evoked the sights, sounds, and smells of carnivals in general and sideshow tents in particular. Spatially and

visually, the convention ballroom was the sideshow tent reincarnate. Sideshow tents were large, oval structures (Bogdan 46). Inside the tent, "each act was curtained off from the next" and "for an extra quarter, customers were admitted to the 'Annexe', which was touted as the most sensational or bizarre freak act of the carnival. Those freaks that did not perform often sold miniature bibles or postcards with their portraits" (Hammer and Basker 14). The tattoo booths lining the ballroom walls become the sideshow stages upon which the tattooing performance was enacted. The premier event of the convention, the "live" tattoo competition, is the "Annexe" for which convention attendees must pay an "entrance fee."

Visual cues also beg the connection between the sideshow and the convention. Perhaps the most compelling link is between the artwork lining the back walls of the booths and the banner displays advertising the sideshow. A sideshow banner line was a row of large canvas paintings strung along the length of the show's front and supposedly depicting the attractions inside (Bogdan 100). Banners were large "portrait paintings" that may be lined up for as long as 140 feet (St. Clair 32). Most often, these banners were vividly colorful and wildly distorted representations of the freak performers (Bogdan 100-102). The murals of artwork lining the back walls of the convention booths produced their own banner line. Instead of advertising the body of the performer, however, these vivid displays advertised the tattooist's artistic skill. Furthermore, there is an art tradition link between banner art and tattooing. Hammer and Basker explain that some tattoo artists employed by circuses and carnivals were also responsible for producing banners (19).

Finally, the word "live" establishes the reproduction of the sideshow performance within the convention:

> The word "alive," in fact, was perhaps the most essential element of any sideshow banner. After all, these advertisements so stretched human imagination that the word "alive" was almost always added to confirm the attraction's authenticity. If the audience could be convinced that the sideshow attractions were alive, then they must also be real, although this was not always the case. (Hammer and Basker 10)

When the convention promoters insist that the competition is "live" they invoke the aura of the sideshow. In its modern manifestation, however, authenticity is less the concern than artistic value, and the audience is a group of peers as opposed to outsiders.

Spatial Outcasts

The social context surrounding and producing sideshow performances at the turn into the twentieth century was highly charged with a desire of the upper classes to separate themselves from the lower classes (Jackson 91-96). One of the manifestations of this desire was the creation of cultural institutions that catered to the economic and social elite:

> Efficiency combined with class bias to dictate the new cultural institutions be organized more with an eye to protecting the standard of the arts than with the theatricality and mingling of tastes which might have drawn mass audiences. The new interest in achievement and cosmopolitan excellence was not solely the product of snobbishness, as many critics of the Gilded Age have charged. The fact that many sponsors of the institutions were business tycoons meant that masterful and rather decisive temperaments directed the cultural reorganization going on. (Harris 20)

A combination of the fear of pollution and the guidance of a few select wealth-empowered individuals resulted in the construction of institutions which "protected" the "arts" by excluding the participation of the mass audience. The heterogeneous

audiences during the antebellum era, which had so annoyed the European cultural elite, were replaced with "decorous, well-bred, and middling to wealthy" audiences paying prohibitively high ticket prices and attired in "full dress" (Harris 21-22). Moreover, the content of the new cultural institutions alienated the working-class audience because it "failed to mirror" the "needs, concerns, and anxieties" of millions of both urban and rural Americans (Wilmeth 3). The working class was, therefore, discursively and materially alienated from the institutions of high art. As a result, popular entertainments were pushed to the social as well as spatial margins.

At the turn of the century, for example, dime museums were most often located in the entertainment districts of urban centers. These districts were located on the margins of the cultural centers of the cities. The Bowery district and Coney Island in New York, for example, were prime locations for dime museums and sideshows (Wilmeth 95). These areas developed into cheap entertainment districts that hosted arcades, concert saloons, and cheap melodrama as well as dime museums. The spatial location of these entertainment districts enacted the elite/upper class attitude towards the content of the amusements. The cultural institutions of art, which the elite were constructing in their effort to create a social as well as economic divide between the classes, pushed popular amusements aside in terms of taste and marginalized them geographically. Once the institutionalization of art began after the Civil War the dime museum lost its elite audience and was forced financially out of the center of the city. The dime museum, consequently, had no place socially, artistically, or spatially in the center of the city.[17]

The spatial marginalization of the popular entertainment and the display of human oddities continued with the advent of the world's fair. At the first world's fair held in the United States in 1876, the popular amusement industry in the form of dime museums, vendors, and showmen set up *across* from the exposition's main building and *outside* of the fairgrounds in temporary structures which earned the name "Shantyville" (Bogdan 48). Not allowed or invited into the event which was designed to celebrate through display the best elements of the world's culture, the popular amusement industry once again took its place on the margin.

The position of popular amusements on the edge of the world's fair was reenacted once more in1893 when Chicago hosted. Chicago's organizers, however, recognized the financial importance of the vendors and so sought to incorporate the popular amusements into the 1893 event. The financial inclusion of the Midway Plaissance was not, however, complemented with a spatial inclusion. The Midway was a 600 feet wide, mile long avenue constructed *outside* the fairgrounds proper (Wilmeth 27). Without the vendors, the fair could not approach financial solvency but this economic reality was not spatially sanctioned.

The economic inclusion/exclusion is complicated further by a moral evaluation of the working class. The official purpose of the Chicago fair was to celebrate the "virtues of a technological society" (Doenecke 540). The space representing these virtues was located in the center of the fairgrounds and was called The White City (Doenecke 542). The implications of the spatial location of this shrine to technological advancement, as well as the racist connotations of the name itself, create a clear

boundary between the virtuous and clean white world and the messy, immoral, and immigrant populated working-class world. The dismal irony, of course, is that it is only through the exclusion of the working class that the upper class could construct an inclusive space for themselves.

After the 1893 Chicago Exposition, traveling carnivals began their tours across the country because the Midway Plaissance provided a forum where the various independent performers and show people converged and began to organize (Wilmeth 22). The marginalization and tawdry reputation traveled right along with them (Bogdan 58). As these touring outdoor entertainments journeyed through the countryside, they stopped in communities and set up their temporary structures at the edge of town. Like the fringe position of "Shantyville," the carnival sits on the edge of polite society. The strongly classified space, consequently, relegates the carnival to a social and cultural margin or threshold. The combination of this physical location and the social evaluation of the performances held within this location, solidified the sleazy and tawdry reputation of the carnival and those associated with it.

Spatial boundaries reflected social boundaries and the early-century working class and their entertainments were subsequently shoved aside. Similarly, Tattoo Voodoo is located on the margin of the city in a suburb of New Orleans. Moreover, the Landmark Hotel is a Best Western hotel and on the grand scale of the hotel elite, more a Holiday Inn than a Ritz-Carleton. Perhaps Tattoo Voodoo is so located because Halloween weekend is an extraordinarily popular tourist weekend in New Orleans and so finding a venue nearer the center of town is prohibitively expensive for a mainly

middle-class, self-employed convention clientele.[18] Or perhaps it is because the upscale convention venues in the French Quarter and Uptown (hotels like the Westin, Marriott, Sheraton, and Radisson) prefer not to host a tattoo convention with all its attendant stereotypically deviant baggage. In either case, the convention is pushed, like it sideshow predecessors, to the margin.

Inside the Show

The convention's spatial and visual citation of the interior of the sideshow also replicates the logic of the sideshow community within the space of the convention. Placed on the margin of society, sideshow performers and audiences began "developing a way of life apart from the mainstream" (Bogdan 30). This culture privileged the freak and excluded the townsperson and was, yet again, spatially reinforced through boundary construction.

Carnival midways, for example, were divided between "front end" games and concessions and "back end" shows and entertainments (Easto and Truzzi 555). Interestingly, within the culture of the carnival, the back end workers considered themselves as higher classed than the front end workers (Easto and Truzzi 555). In the microcosm of the carnival, the space is still strongly classified and, once again, the periphery is the site of the lesser privileged. What is perhaps more intriguing, however, is how the classification of space within the carnival inverts the class distinctions of the outside world. From the outside, the performers in the sideshow tent were more than merely low class; they were freaks. Inside the carnival, however, it is the freak show that occupies the central space of authority. Within the carnival entertainment industry,

the most popular and often largest event on the midway, for example, was the freak show or "ten-in-one" (Easto and Truzzi 552, Bogdan 10). Moreover, the townspeople were not allowed in the rear of the carnival, behind the side show tents (Easto and Truzzi 559). This back stage area where the carnival performers lived was off limits to the general public. By refusing entrance, the carnival employee used space to shift power relations; within the world of the carnival, the freaks had control of who was allowed to enter their space.

Highly classified space with strong boundaries produced the sideshow entertainer as both sleazy and celebrated. The lines of demarcation enabled the working class as much as excluded them by producing a space where carnival workers could enact their own class identity. Placed on the margin of polite and upper-class society, the popular entertainment industry was empowered to create its own classification system, as well as subvert and transgress mainstream social customs and norms, because they were not held accountable to them. Popular entertainers were outside and on the edge. The tattoo convention reinscribes that transgressive authority by also creating a space where transgressing appearance norms (both in terms of tattoos and costume) *is* the norm.

Boundaries and spatial marginalization produce two distinct worlds: inside the side show/tattoo community and outside that community in the "normal" social arena. The boundaries created areas where specific behaviors were produced as acceptable based on their adherence to the social norms prevalent *inside* the borders. The lines serve as a public notice suggesting that the world on the other side invites and accepts a

different set of norms. Within the sideshow, the tattooed body and tattoo culture are celebrated. Outside of the sideshow, however, that body is classified as deviant.

On/In the Threshold

The culture of the sideshow is clearly separated from mainstream culture. The easy delineation of inside/outside is, however, disrupted by the position of sideshow subculture on/in the threshold. Popular amusements were pushed to the edges of the world's fair and to the outer limits of the city, and the boundary lines between those areas and the sites of cultural privilege were clearly drawn. On the other hand, these marginal places were also those through which individuals must pass in order to reach the privileged center. Vendors and popular entertainers, for example, occupied threshold space during the 1876 and 1893 world's fairs. In order to gain entrance into the exposition, the audience had to first pass through "Shantyville" and the Midway Plaissance. The audience members left their everyday lives to enter the celebration of 'C'ulture exhibited by the fair but first encountered the sensual chaos of hearing hawkers and vendors talking their spiel, seeing human freaks on platforms and banners, smelling and tasting a combination of meats and sweets, and feeling the press of the crowd as they made their way through to the other side. Moreover, visitors to towns, or those living outside of the city limits, must first pass through, or at least by, the carnival in order to enter the city. Everyone must pass through the threshold in order to reach the White City or the center of town.

Bakhtin indicates the significance of threshold space in his discussion of the chronotope in "Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel." According to Bakhtin, a

chronotope is a specific expression of how space and time interact to create environments that allow and produce specific behaviors: "Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history" ("Chronotope" 84). For Bakhtin, the environment of the threshold is characterized by danger, possibility, and indeterminacy. The threshold is more than a mere boundary between the outside and inside. The threshold is a place containing the time of indecision and decision, crisis, and breaking points (Bakhtin, "Chronotope" 248). This association suggests that within the threshold spatial classification systems weaken and begin to deteriorate. This breakdown opens up possibilities for transgression. Unlike simple boundary crossing, which has the potential to be easily dichotomized, crossing *through* the gaps and fissures of threshold space is not so neatly packaged into either/or categories. Spectators passing through the threshold of the Chicago World's Fair, therefore, navigated through a place where their habitual modes of interpretation and cognitive schemas for interpreting and evaluating behavior were challenged by hybridity. They were in the world of the both/and; a world that was both part of their everyday world and not, both part of the World's Fair world and not, both easy to classify and simultaneously defiant of classification. The upper class must pass through this space/time of instability populated by working and lower-class amusements in order to reach the White City. The upper class must, at least for a moment, experience the threshold's destabilizing force.

Tattoo Voodoo, importantly, reproduces this sense of the threshold. The first threshold at Tattoo Voodoo was the general hotel lobby. The people populating this space represented a combination hotel guests and employees. In other words, the hotel lobby as a threshold is a relatively weakly classified space, allowing the intermingling of people located in a variety of social positions (Sibley 81). The second threshold was the doubly guarded ticket booth area. In 1999, for example, pirates flanked the first threshold and the ticket vendors and security guard protected the second. The pirates beckoned to those in the lobby. Their cartoon-like demeanor was reminiscent not only of the painted banners located outside of carnivals and circuses, but also of modern marketing ploys at large-scale amusement parks such as Disney Land. If this facade lured an unsuspecting tourist, however, the second-order sentries were an unsettling suggestion that perhaps the space on the other side was not meant for the general public.

Although I was certain that my money was enough to gain admission, despite the fact that I certainly performed my outsider status both in terms of my uninformed behavior and my body's lack of visible tattoos, I was unsure if I would *belong* to the space I was entering. This feeling persisted both years I attended. In 2000, the pirates were gone, but the ticket table and security guard remained. This time I knew what to do, so I walked confidently up to the ticket table, pausing to smile at the security guard. This year a different person dressed in jeans and a white polo shirt with "SECURITY" written across the back turned to glance at my eagerly grinning countenance with strangely opaque white eyes. Briefly startled by the white contacts, I chuckled inwardly: "Well, what exactly did you expect, Fenske?"

The threshold was a place where codes of the outside world clashed with signifiers of the tattoo world of the inside. My non-visibly tattooed body still marked me as an outsider despite my familiarity with the process of entrance. My ability to negotiate the threshold was not sufficient for me to claim insider status–my body did not display the visible evidence of my tattooed identity. For those tattooed bodies whose behavior was alienated in the lobby, therefore, the ticket booth was a table marking the "safe boundary space of the convention" (Braunberger 17). For the non-tattooed, however, the ticket booth was the wardrobe transformed into mystical gateway: a place of both invitation and warning. As a location that canalizes behavior, therefore, the threshold *produces* uncertainty.

Each threshold also acted as a sort of social filter, distilling the general population of the hotel's weakly classified hotel lobby into more clearly defined cultural groups. The passage through these entryways felt very much like I was moving deeper into the tattoo world and leaving mainstream culture behind. The sentries at each entrance acted as virtual and very literal gatekeepers foreshadowing the aura of the inside. The security guard's body in the threshold, for example, represented the transition from one culture to another. These sentries, much like the ticket takers and security guards of the carnival and circus, manage the space of the threshold. They are the keepers of the key. The price of admission becomes a mechanism to either deter the uninvited voyeurism of the non-tattooed upper and middle class and/or a measure of the commitment of the potential audience member/participant. As I stood watching the tattooed bodies parade across the tattoo competition stage, for example, I was struck by

the feeling that my body was out of place in this audience and this place. Instead of feeling comfortable in my usual position of unmarked middle-class whiteness, I felt implicated because I was not obviously tattooed. Minutes before I was safely ensconced in the lobby of the hotel where my body was in the position of social privilege and the tattooed convention attendees drew stares from hotel guests. Now, forty feet and an eon later, the roles were reversed. The mainstream position of privilege is thus performatively inverted. The spatial configuration suggests a highly and strongly classified system, but the performance of privilege within this classified space is that of the culturally defined deviant body.

The marginalization and the subsequent construction of threshold space and the creation of identity and inversion of social authority occurring within the threshold successfully produces the tattoo convention as a site where mainstream social class privilege is destabilized. My experience in the threshold between the lobby of the hotel and the lobby of the Expo was a result of the tattoo convention's reenactment of strongly classified boundaries as well as its memory of the position of sideshow subculture on the threshold. The convention, therefore, is the specific interaction between space and time that creates the safe-haven for the tattooed body to perform. In the Expo, as in the carnival, the position of insider privilege is the domain of the freakish body. My feeling of discomfort at not really belonging or being allowed backstage, therefore, was a resurrection of the carnival and circus bias against outsiders. The tattooed bodies and performers within the context of the twentieth-century tattoo

convention re-enact, therefore, the inversion of privilege constituted by the back end and front end relations of the carnival.

The contemporary Expo utilizes this inversion in a more aggressive manner, however. In the context of the late twentieth-century spatial configuration, the ticket buys admission for the outsiders while simultaneously reminding them that they do not belong. The largely hidden disdain that the carnival employees felt toward the townspeople and "rubes" they depended upon financially becomes an overt and performatively heightened performance in the convention context. The backstage of the carnival spatially becomes the frontstage, or main event, of the tattoo convention while maintaining the ethic of the carnival backstage. In this ballroom and on this weekend (Halloween) the normal becomes deviant as the ticket table becomes the threshold into the privileged and central exhibition that features that which is usually marginalized.

The Southern Comfort Tattoo Expo is clearly a performative displacement of the sideshow context. The contemporary tattoo convention's outside status, its manipulation of threshold space, and its celebration of the tattooed body and marginalization of the non-tattooed outsider are all performatively possible because of the Expo's reiteration of the prior cultural performance of the sideshow. Moreover, it is because the spatial configuration of the boundaries of the Expo and sideshow are so strongly classified that the threshold is empowered to enact the tension between inside and outside. The defining spatial characteristic of the live performance venue for the tattooed body is, therefore, indeterminacy and inversion of class privilege. It must be

said, however, that this inversion occurs primarily within the venue and so its transgressive potential is limited.

Conclusion

The extensively tattooed body on display is always marked as deviating from mainstream social norms. Efforts to align the extensively tattooed body with high status "art" have served, therefore, to reenact class oppression within the tattoo community through the efforts to endow the body with social legitimacy. Despite the tattoo convention's success in appropriating classification discourse in order to celebrate the tattooed body, however, the inversion of categories of privilege does not deconstruct the logic of categorization. The tattoo, reconceived as a piece of art, is subject to the normalizing influence of categorization. As Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett suggests, this move erases the uniqueness of the individual through the "universalizing rhetoric of 'art'" (25). The tattoo, in other words, becomes a singular object readily classified and exhibited as art (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 25). The tattooed body is once again fragmented for the purpose of display and "returns with all the problems of capturing, inferring, constituting, and presenting the whole through parts" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 55). The tattoo competition context, like the scientific discourse of the turn of the century, controls the animation and intangibility of the body. The object has been redefined from evidence of deviance into art, but the effect of objectification persists.[19] As a result, the citation of the authority of classification discourse reinscribes upper and lower class privilege within the tattoo community. Tattoo contests, therefore, may be an example of using style as a form of resistance, but the efficacy of the resistance is

somewhat thwarted when the structure of the subculture begins to mimic the structure of the mainstream.

There was, however, an event during the contest that offers insight into an alternative scenario. When the man jiggled his beer belly and the participants in the contest began to laugh, there was a momentary disruption of the power of the contest context to control the behavior of the participants. His body did not "fit" the constraints of the context. His movement forced the audience to recognize the insufficiency of the contest category as a framework for evaluating his body; he overflowed the effort of the context to control the meaning of his body. The resulting laughter, therefore, was a reaction to the irony of placing this body on stage as a privileged, high status, representative of aesthetic form. The audience was forced out of their blind acceptance of the norms implied by the context. Audience members simply had to laugh at the idea that this man's beer belly had become "art" and that they, at least for a moment, had bought into the facade.

The tattooed body in this particular performance thus enacted the potential of parody to disrupt the logic of normalization. Parody is an intentional mimicry of a traditional cultural form (Falk and Teague 219). Parodies mock the very form that they approximate. Parody's power lies, consequently, in its ability to lay bare the ideological structure of the convention it imitates. This particular situation is unique, however, because the form of the contest itself was not parodic. The tattoo competition attempted to appropriate, rather than mock, the logic of classification. As we saw, however, this inversion was largely unsuccessful. This man's performance, however, temporarily

called attention to the irony of holding the tattooed beer belly up as an icon of upper class aesthetics. His actions mocked the seriousness of the event and so successfully questioned the efficacy of appropriating classification discourse as a mechanism to empower the tattooed body.

The liminality of the threshold offers another possibility for the tattooed body to resist the power of status discourse. In this case, the potential for resistance is provided not by parody's ability to question a strongly classified frame, but by the weakly classified boundaries of the tattoo convention. The tattoo convention resurrects the threshold space of the sideshow and in so doing produces a threshold space where bodies from all classes can intermingle. Moreover, within this space, bodies are positively evaluated for their *deviance* from mainstream norms. The upper class, unmarked, and comfortable position of mainstream cultural privilege is effectively swept out from under the feet of the non-tattooed body within this threshold. Consequently, the low-class tattooed body as an embodiment of the potential for transformation is the norm and the upper class body representing the position of privilege in a strongly classified system is the outcast. The limitation of the threshold, however, is that it is short-lived. The tattoo competition is a finite event with a distinct beginning and ending inviting a limited amount of participants.

Within the representational format of the tattoo convention, the power to resist the controlling power of the discourse of class occurred, therefore, when the body overflowed the representational context of the contest and when authorizing historical discourse produced the instability of the threshold. The next chapter explores the

tattooed body within the mediated frame of advertising in order to determine whether the potential to overflow representation is possible when the body itself cannot move. Can the body represented in advertising break through into performance and resist reproduction?

Notes

1. The convention flyer advertised the tattoo competition as a "live" event. This did not, however, mean that tattooing would be practiced on stage. Rather, it meant that "live" bodies (as opposed to photographs) would be on display. The rhetoric of the "live" performance hinted clearly to the sideshow precursor. Hammer and Basker note that the banners advertising sideshows nearly always included the word "live" somewhere on the banner image as a way to suggest the reality of the freak on display in order to defend against the audience's skepticism (even though in many cases the exhibit was not "live" at all).

2. See DeMello Bodies of Inscription 1, 26-32, 129-131.

3. The term "tattoo collectors" refers to people who are not tattoo artists, have been tattooed more than once, probably intend to be tattooed again, are proud of their tattoos, and probably are not shy about showing their tattoos.

4. See, for example, www.tattoos.com for a fairly thorough listing of upcoming tattoo conventions and photographic documentation of previously held conventions.

5. The distinction I am drawing here is between the competition as a specific event and the convention as a whole. People with tattoos primarily populate the convention and those tattoos are conspicuously displayed. While mingling on the convention floor, however, the attendees interact at multiple levels and the tattoo is not always the focal point. When on stage, however, the tattoos are the premier attraction.

6. Krakow indicates that a typical convention includes at least fifty or sixty tattoo artists performing their art and selling their designs alongside t-shirt, postcard, book, magazine and video vendors (155).

7. Tattoos can, of course, be removed or be hidden from view. The distinction, however, is that the tattoo on display is a sign signifying something more socially and physically implicating than clothing or hair styles. It is a sign that represents a choice to become permanently associated with a particular identity–an identity that during most of the twentieth century in the U.S. has been labeled criminal and deviant.

8. It is important to note that at this particular convention all of the bodies entered into competition were white bodies. Although I am unwilling to assert any definitive explanation for this, I would tentatively suggest that since tattooing as an artistic practice is dominated by white men and that tattoos on Hispanic, African American and Asian men in the United States are often associated with either celebrity status (athletes, musicians, actors, and models) or criminality (gang membership), that this setting had limited appeal. I would further suggest that the increased popularity of tattooing among the middle class is a largely white middle-class phenomenon.

9. It is also interesting to note that the contest assumes some distinction between male and female tattooed bodies. This distinction implies that tattoo design and style are gender coded, an issue I will address more extensively in Chapter Three.

10. Braunberger contests that in her experience at conventions, there was a distinction in the style of performance of the men and women on the tattoo competition stage. She indicates that the men seemed "grudging" to be on stage but that the women were not at all embarrassed to take the stage scantily clad in swimsuits (16). This was not the case at the Expo I attended. Nary a swimsuit did I see. Also, the relative level of grudgingness seemed more linked to personality and audience support than to gender. Men or women who were animated drew audience reaction and those who were not, did not. Perhaps the difference in my and Braunberger's experience is because the competitions Braunberger describes appear to award prizes primarily to the tattooed body whereas the Expo competition was clearly about the artist. She cites, for example, the comment of a "veteran tattoo collector" who felt she was not "feminine-looking enough" one year and so went on a diet and changed her costume and "won first place the following year" (17). I also think that the Southern Comfort Expo was not on as grand a scale as some of these other conventions and did not focus so exclusively on professional or artistic tattooing; it was a much more heterogeneous class mix. Finally, Southern Comfort is in the deep South and offers a very different cultural context than conventions held in California or New York.

11. For a more detailed discussion of the narrative surrounding the performance of illustrated men and women, see Chapter Three.

12. It was in the 1920s and 1930s when the tattooed performers lost their purely visual appeal because of a glut in the market. As a result, tattooed men and women began to perform acts like sword swallowing and becoming human "blockheads" in order to maintain their audience and, consequently, their livelihood.

13. For further reading about the power of the aesthetic gaze to finalize the form of the other see Bakhtin's "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity."

14. Fiske argues, for example, that self-display is vulgar (29). Turim additionally indicates that nudity in nickelodeon film was seen as a draw for low-class, but not middle-class, audiences (147).

15. DeMello ("Carnivalesque Body") suggests that women's tattoos are carnivalesque.

16. For further discussion of the body's ability to use techniques it is given to manipulate discourse see Frank (48).

17. This is an interesting contrast to the mid-nineteenth century. Barnum's American Museum, for example, was located in the heart of New York at the corner of Broadway and Ann. It was during the Jacksonian inspired 1840's that Barnum's museum flourished, however, when his audience was not as class segregated and the social attitude toward the display of human oddities was generally ambivalent.

18. Although I think this is a weak explanation considering that tattoo conventions are an international affair. Tattoo artists from the United States travel from Tokyo to Amsterdam to attend conventions. At Tattoo Voodoo, for example, there were around fifty studios representing four countries including The Netherlands, Austria, Germany and the United States. American artists traveled from as far as New York, California, and Minnesota. Tattoo artists also charge a minimum of around fifty dollars for a tattoo that they can accomplish in forty-five minutes. In other words, tattoo artists are not necessarily people of small economic means.

21. For a further discussion of the process of classifying ethnographic objects for the purpose of display, see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (17-78).

CHAPTER THREE
ROSIE THE RIVETER, THE MARLBORO MAN, AND UMJAMMER LAMMY

In 1999 and 2000 Tampax, a division of Proctor and Gamble, ran a print advertising campaign in which the late 1940's war poster image of Rosie the Riveter was tattooed with the words "TAMPAX WAS THERE" on her arm. The advertisement not only recalls the power of Rosie the Riveter as a cultural symbol of feminism and recodes the tension circulating between signs of masculinity and femininity in the Rosie image, it also importantly adorns her with a tattoo. This addition to the image of Rosie the Riveter complicates the gender tension because the tattoo is also a site of gender conflict.

The purpose of this chapter is to situate the tattooed body within advertising discourse and gender, both because advertising is an important social text in general, and because tattoos have been increasingly represented in advertising campaigns. Advertising images do much more than sell products, they produce and communicate social and personal values (Williams 421). Consequently, as Kellner suggests:

> [A]dvertising is an important social text and social indicator which provides a repository of information concerning social trends, current fashions, contemporary values, and what really concerns the denizens of consumer capitalism. Much can therefore be learned from studying advertising. (Kellner 36)

Kellner furthermore contends that the something to be learned is tied to advertising's displacement of "other forms of public discourse" (36). Kellner implies that advertising images and messages have become as (or more) significant as, for example, literature, public speeches, and theatre to the dissemination and construction of social norms and

values. As a result, "advertising became a dominant public discourse of the 20th century with its portrayals of commodities, consumption, life-styles, values, and gender roles" (Kellner 36-7). Advertising images are clearly a significant participant in the production of culture.[1]

Moreover, one of the consequences of the tattoo renaissance has been an increasing presence of tattooed bodies in advertising campaigns. In 1999, for example, clothing and fashion labels like Mossimo, Calvin Klein, Guess, and Polo utilized tattooed models in their magazine advertising campaigns.[2] Even a 1999 Sony PlayStation advertisement for a video game featured the female animated "guitar-slinging megastar" of "UmJammer Lammy" depicted by a photograph of the stomach of a (presumably) female model with a tattoo around her pierced belly-button proclaiming "THERE'S A NEW ROCK STAR IN TOWN" (Ray Gun 6-7). In this case the tattooed body is not a model for clothing, but a strategically chosen sign whose value is to be associated with the product.[3] Considering advertising's role in the production and communication of social values, therefore, the representation of the tattooed body within that frame becomes an important site for the production and communication of its meaning.

The choice to focus almost exclusively on the Tampax advertisement is motivated by three considerations. Initially, the Tampax advertisement utilizes a cultural figure that gained its initial currency prior to becoming tattooed. Rosie the Riveter entered our national consciousness in the 1940s as a non-tattooed body. As a result, the Tampax advertisement is important because it demonstrates how the tattoo alters the

cultural meaning of the body. Secondly, Rosie is not a real person and so the element of motivation and individual choice is removed from the interpretive equation. The meaning of the tattoo cannot be attributed to Rosie's personality; it cannot be argued to be an expression of her individual autonomy or identity. Rosie is not a "real" woman, but an illustrated cultural icon of womanhood.[4] To that extent, her tattooed body becomes a unique text for understanding what the tattoo as a cultural sign means independently from motive or psychological interpretation. Thirdly, the Tampax advertisement is the nexus of multiple historical discourses because of its appropriation of two seemingly unrelated signs: Rosie the Riveter and tattoos. The advertisement demonstrates, therefore, what happens when a cultural surrogate stands in for multiple prior representations and how those histories are related.

In this chapter I argue that certain body parts are strongly identified as masculine and feminine and that advertising images incorporating bodies with tattoos express as well as oppose this identification. The classification system similar to that which controls the social status of the tattooed body, therefore, also controls its gender identification. Moreover, this commercialized tattooed body in the media, like its tattoo competition counterparts, rearticulates as well as reinforces norms. I additionally suggest that the form of the advertisement represents social interaction and social space. This analysis, therefore, concentrates on the social and spatial context of the advertisement as well as on the active kinesthetic memory retained in the advertising image. In so doing, I argue

that the tattooed body in contemporary advertisements is made meaningful through its recollection and citation of past advertisements and their social and historical contexts.

More specifically, I am interested in how gender norms are destabilized as well as expressed by the symbolic performance of the image of the tattooed body. My approach to gender assumes that it is socially constructed. To argue that gender is a social construction is to presume that gender "is a fantasy instituted and inscribed on the surface of bodies" (Butler, Gender Trouble 174). There is no inherent or biological gender, in other words, but rather "a fluid assemblage of the meanings and behaviors that we construct from the values, images and prescriptions we find in the world around us" (Kimmel, The Gendered Society 87). To be feminine or to be masculine consequently requires identification with images, and the enactment of behaviors, deemed culturally appropriate for each category.

Furthermore, gender categories, according to Acker, are constructed "in at least five interacting processes" (167). The processes include: (1) practices that produce gender divisions, including spatial configurations, (2) symbols and images from popular culture and the media that explain, express, reinforce and sometimes oppose gender divisions, (3) interaction between men and women, (4) components of individual identity such as clothing and presentation of self, (5) social and organizational structures (Acker 167). Gender is produced within multiple representations as well as through human behavior. In addition, it is inscribed and reproduced in social space as well as onto our bodies. As a result, our bodies produce themselves as gendered via their behavior, are

produced as gendered in representation, and are understood as gendered based upon the gendered spaces within which they act.[5]

Kimmel additionally suggests that understanding this process of gender production "requires that we locate individual identity within a historically and socially specific and equally gendered place and time, and that we situate the individual within the complex matrix of our lives, our bodies, and our social and cultural environments" (Kimmel, The Gendered Society 95). Because gender is not a fixed identity category, it must also be historically and socially defined. Any analysis of gender, therefore, should attend to bodies and space within their specific historical and social context.

One of the consequences of gender's social construction, according to Butler, is that gender "becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that man and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and woman and feminine a male body as easily as a female one" (Gender Trouble 6). Despite the ability of male or female bodies to signify both masculine and feminine traits, however, male bodies continue to be evaluated against masculine norms and female bodies against feminine norms:

> Identifying with a gender under contemporary regimes of power involves identifying with a set of norms that are not realizable, and whose power and status precede the identifications by which they are insistently approximated. This "being a man" and this "being a woman" are internally unstable affairs. They are always beset by ambivalence precisely because there is a cost in every identification, the loss of some other set of identifications, the forcible approximation of a norm one never chooses, a norm that chooses us, but which we occupy, reverse, resignify to the extent that the norm fails to determine us completely. (Butler, Bodies that Matter 126-7)

Gender is unstable because the body never fully adheres to the norms that attempt to regulate its meaning. The failure of gender norms to fully determine identity, therefore, produces gaps, inconsistencies in gender performances, that open up potential sites for resistance to the norm. In other words, it is when an image or performance of a body does not quite "fit" the culturally sanctioned definition of what is masculine or feminine that the carefully constructed camouflage of the norm unravels to expose itself as a construction.[6] The possibility for disruption of gender categories enacts the potential for bodies to slip through easy identification with either one or the other category: the potential to become, as Butler would have it, troubled.

The following analysis, therefore, attends to the processes of gender signified by images and symbols of the tattooed body located in the setting the advertisement constructs, the setting of the advertising campaign, and the larger socio-historical setting. I identify moments when the tattooed body in representation does not fit neatly into gender categories in order to determine whether lack of identification equals resistance.

The journey that I follow leads down three historical paths or citational chains. The first trail winds back to WWII when Norman Rockwell's Rosie the Riveter graced the front page of the Saturday Evening Post. The second route returns to a similar time by hearkening back to the 1950s introduction of the Marlboro Man by the Philip Morris company via the Leo Burnett advertising agency. The third avenue situates the tattooed body in advertising within the gender discourse of the late-century context through the UmJammer Lammy advertisement. These paths converge at the site of the Tampax

advertisement. I argue that the Tampax advertisement is a cultural surrogate of these other representations of the body. Consequently, the advertisement's meaning, as well as the gendered meaning of tattoos and the tattooed body, are instances of the displaced transmission of these texts.

Tampax and Rosie the Riveter

The advertisement that I originally encountered appeared in the January 2000 issue of Glamour magazine (101). Glamour is a popular women's magazine in the U.S. featuring articles about women's fashion, diet, exercise, health and social issues. The advertisement is, with one notable addition, an exact reproduction of a poster of Rosie the Riveter produced by the War Production Coordinating Committee in the 1940s.[7] The advertisement, like the poster, depicts "a young, pretty, white woman. . .flexing her biceps while rolling up her sleeves" (Dabakis 199). The image is not a photograph but an illustration of a woman standing profile before a yellow background with her head turned so it "looks directly at the viewer" (Dabakis 199). Above the woman's slightly tilted back head, in a blue cartoon-like bubble, the phrase "We Can Do It!" is printed in white block letters. She is wearing a red scarf with white polka dots wrapped around her hair and tied in a small bow at the top of her head. Tendrils of her brown hair sneak out of the scarf at the base of the neck, temples, and forehead. Her eyebrows are finely manicured and the left is slightly cocked. Mascara-laden lashes frame her blue eyes. Her nose is petite, and her unsmiling, small, full lips are shaded with a light pink hue. She is wearing a blue-collared, button-down, long-sleeved shirt. A round button with a black

and white image of a woman's scarved head is pinned to the collar of the shirt. Her right arm is flexed and her right hand is clenched in a fist near her face. Her left hand (with short, lightly glossed, manicured finger nails) is rolling up the sleeve of the flexed arm to reveal the forearm and biceps. The sleeve of the left arm is already rolled.

The only change that the Tampax advertisement makes to the poster image is a tattoo reading "TAMPAX WAS THERE" imprinted upon the biceps of her right arm in black ink. The word Tampax, in addition to being printed in boldface, capitalized font, is surrounded by a black line that creates a rectangular frame for the word. The one other change/addition made to the war poster is the address for the Tampax web site in small print in the bottom right-hand corner.

The advertisement conspicuously recalls/constructs a feminist vision of women's labor. It asks its contemporary female audience to remember the importance of female labor to the war effort. Within this context, "We Can Do It!" becomes a battle cry for the late twentieth-century woman to break through the glass ceiling with the same force with which it implies women in the 1940s entered the workforce. Moreover, it uses the tattoo to bridge the generational gap between the 1940's woman and her contemporary counterpart. The image insinuates that the tattooed woman of today is the corollary to the Rosie the Riveters of WWII. The target audience of the advertisement is the generation of late twentieth-century women who are asserting control over their bodies by flaunting their ability to defy appearance norms. In the same way that the female laborer in WWII broke free of domestic constraints via labor, the advertisement seems to

want to say, the tattooed woman of the 1990s breaks through gender constraints via control of her body, both by becoming tattooed and by using Tampax.

The meaning the advertisement desires to construct is, however, complicated by the historical authority its images recall, as well as their situation within the context of an advertisement for tampons. The following discussion provides a detailed description of the war poster and its gender implications within the historical context of the mid-century before returning to the Tampax's advertisement citation and revision of that history.

The "original" Rosie the Riveter that the Tampax advertisement refers to is a poster based upon the Norman Rockwell print that decorated the May 29, 1943, cover of the Saturday Evening Post. In the poster, Rosie's female body is constructed as a maculinized worker whose purpose was to lure middle-class women into the work force (Dabakis 197-201). The Rosie poster, consequently, mixes signs of femininity and masculinity.

The signs of masculinity circulate around the body (as opposed to the head) of Rosie the Riveter. The arm is muscular and poised defiantly with clenched fist and is revealed by the act of rolling up the sleeve of a "blue-collar" workman's shirt. The arm connotes masculine strength:

> In the sign of the arm, the contradictions implicit in the rhetoric of women and labor were exposed. These are not the bodies of middle-class women whose dainty and delicate arms, wrists, and hands performed such detailed domestic labor as needlework. These images represented the bodies of (unsexed) workers, their femininity only partially asserted. (Dabakis 199)

Dabakis suggests that the image of the arm is both masculine and working class. An additional implication of this statement is that the feminine image of the woman in the poster is middle class.

Moreover, masculine labor is constructed as patriotic. Rosie wears a blue shirt and her head is wrapped in a red and white scarf. The reference the color scheme cites is the Rockwell print which has the Rosie figure sitting in front of a large U.S. flag that appears suspended in mid air and folded so as to suggest a waving motion. In Rockwell's version, however, the symbol of country is the backdrop and seems supportive of the Rosie figure. In the poster version, Rosie *is* the flag. In other words, the working-class masculine labor she represents merges with the symbol of the U.S.A. Rosie is not completely masculine, however. Her femininity also participates in the poster's portrayal.

The feminine signifiers are largely centered around Rosie's face and head. The cosmetics on the face, the perfectly manicured eyebrows, and the pouting lips with a hint of pink lipstick strongly suggest femininity. Her expression, however, is unsmiling and the cocked eyebrow challenges the viewer to deny the assertion that women "can do" the labor required of them in the work place. This is hardly an expression designed to appeal to men as a sexual object. Rosie's sexual appeal is additionally subverted because her breasts are camouflaged by the masculine display of the arms. The only suggestion of her female body is the tapering of the slightly rounded line of her chest to her waist. Despite the unsmiling demeanor, however, this is the head and face of a woman who

could just as easily be performing needlepoint as wielding a riveting gun. This image is unlike photographic representations of women who actually worked as unskilled industrial laborers. Photographs taken by Dorothea Lange, for example, feature women working in a California shipyard who "lacked signs of womanhood" (Dabakis 194). These were women who wore no make-up, dressed in workman's clothes, and, according to Dabakis, thwarted the possibility of assigning gender definitions (194). The response of the military propaganda machine attempted to counter this image by reinscribing the working woman with domestic feminine middle-class characteristics. The Rosie of the war poster is more the image of the style and refinement of a salesperson, therefore, than that of factory laborer.[8] In fact, taken separately from the masculine body, this woman conformed to other images of femininity constructed through magazine product advertising. She is more reminiscent of women brandishing vacuum cleaners in Life Magazine, for example, than of Lange's shipyard worker.[9]

Additionally, the feminine is given the voice in the poster. In a cartoon bubble above Rosie's head is the phrase "We Can Do It!" written in white letters on a blue background. This first appears to invert the social dominance of men because the voice seems to provide the feminine with agency. The voice fails to complete the inversion, however, because of the mid-century interpretation of teamwork and interpersonal skills as feminine traits (Shumway 126). Femininity is located in a specific style of interaction that defaces the individual and exalts the group. When Rosie's delicate features and cosmetically correct face announce "We Can Do It!" the poster enacts the group

orientation and interpersonal savvy of the feminine. The voice speaks in feminine language. Additionally, the implicit class distinctions prevent the success of the inversion. Rosie's face and head signify feminine refinement with cosmetics while her body exemplifies working-class masculinity. The status hierarchy the poster performatively enacts, consequently, asserts the primacy of the refined feminine mind over the indelicate strength and force of the blue-collar male body. Gender and status norms are clearly performed via the kinesthetic imagination and spatial configuration of the poster. And, as Dabakis indicates, these signs coexist in an uneasy tension (201).

This choice to locate the feminine characteristics around the head and face is interesting because it spatially demonstrates a separation of mind and body and locates the gender division in that separation. The strong body is masculine but the mind and voice are feminine. The poster, consequently, spatially enacts this social division by highlighting the feminine characteristics of the face and head and the masculine characteristics of the arms. The feminine and masculine are uneasily connected but still separate.

The symbolic tension between masculine and feminine symbols in Rosie's image reproduced the social tension between the masculine and feminine present in the WW II era. The need to include women in the labor force during the war years presented U.S. culture with a gender dilemma: how to maintain the line between masculine and feminine when women were performing masculinity in the work place? The response to the tension was, according to Dabakis, a strategically constructed vision of the woman at

work. The basic premise underlying the vision was that female war workers did not lose their "true spirit of femininity" (Dabakis 191). The performance of this true femininity within the context of labor was culturally maintained through the promotion of cosmetics, the glamorization of workplace costumes, and the argument that the women were able to perform these masculine tasks only because of technological innovations (Dabakis 191). The poster enacts this maintenance in the image of the working woman wearing cosmetics and glamorizing her workman's shirt with the red and white scarf.

A second gender conflict reproduced in the image is between domesticity and public labor as feminine constructs. Evans explains that women were torn between popular images of domesticity and their growing experience of entering the work force (260). The poster image rehearses the cultural confusion created when two seemingly opposed definitions of femininity coexist by combining signifiers from masculine and feminine sets of identifications. Rosie is an expert in cosmetic application and exhibits her fashion acumen by enriching the dull workman's shirt with a colorful head scarf. Conversely, her arms are muscular and she wears a decidedly unglamorous expression on her face. Rosie, therefore, articulates the ambivalence of gender identification by demonstrating Judith Butler's argument that the body both occupies and resignifies gender norms because norms always fail to fully or satisfactorily determine the body's meaning. The codes of masculinity and femininity cannot adequately express the working woman's reality during the war. The poster's construction of Rosie the Riveter

reflects this inadequacy by floating in the ambiguous discursive performative space of the both/and. She is masculine and feminine, coarse and socially refined. She is an anomaly.

Mary Douglas suggests that the power of the cultural anomaly lies in its clarification of "the set in which it is not a member" (39). It is because the gender signs in the poster present clearly contrasted definitions of both masculinity and femininity, therefore, that the image clarifies the limits of those normative sets. Rosie's anomalous gender identification empowers her image to resignify norms by performing their failure to capture and reflect the everyday reality of women's experience. Neither category satisfactorily contains her experience. The rhetorical aim of the poster to reinsert femininity into images of the working woman, therefore, merely illustrated the inadequacy of gender constructs to encapsulate women's experience.

The cultural tension of gender ambiguity that the Rosie the Riveter war poster symbolically enacts is rearticulated within the contemporary context of the Tampax advertisement with the important addition of the tattoo. The struggle with gender identification in late twentieth-century society is enacted through homophobia, sexual harassment, and the lack of adequate child care. The introduction of women into the public domain of the workplace and the resulting struggle with gender definition that Rosie represented in the 1940s, therefore, continue to resonate today. U.S. culture in the late-century grapples with the dilemma between politically promoting the heterogeneity and multiplicity of gendering and the persistence of the logic of binary categorization. The masculine vs. feminine tension that erupted in the mid-century has,

therefore, evolved into masculinities and femininities in tension both between and among themselves. Garrison points out, for example, that "the shift from speaking about 'women' as a unified subject to a recognition that women are not all the same, nor should they be, is something most feminists, young and not as young, take for granted in the 1990s." Kimmel concurs when he notes that men are increasingly dissatisfied with traditional definitions of masculinity and are in search of new formulations that more accurately represent their everyday reality (The Gendered Society 268). The advertisement's performative power is located, therefore, in its citation of the historical authority of the war poster within this new cultural context. The gender signifiers are rearticulated in the advertisement, therefore, because the contemporary advertisement is both located in a new cultural context where gender complexities have become more recognized, and is not a patriotic call for entry into the workforce but is a pitch for tampons.

The advertisement implies that the women during WWII were able to accomplish masculine labor because they had the benefit of a product designed to clean up the pollution of the female body. Menstrual blood signifies both uncleanness and suggests the strong divide between men and women (Douglas 63). The advertisement insinuates that tampons emancipated women from their feminine "curse" thus enabling their effective service to country. Only by controlling the excess of the female body, the image implies, could women be valuable in the labor arena. Rosie is no longer an anomalous image where signifiers of femininity and masculinity rest in separate and

uneasy tension. She is a woman who has suppressed her femininity. The cultural reaction to Rosie's gender ambiguity as articulated in the advertisement is to strengthen the gender divisions to which Rosie did not initially conform. This is, according to Douglas, a common cultural response to anomalous figures and events (40).

The contemporary advertisement simultaneously recalls a history of women's achievements and situates those achievements as made possible by the repression of that which is most inherently female. The advertisement's apparent desire to invoke female strength and attach that image to Tampax ultimately fails because the function of the product aligns female success with masculine values. Women only succeed, the image implies, when they simulate masculinity. The sign of Rosie and her communication of the tension between masculinity and femininity becomes a reproduction of dominant masculine privilege within the representational frame of a tampon advertisement.

The phrase "We Can Do It!" also takes on new meaning when read within the new context. Do what? Use tampons? Become masculine? Go shopping? The battle cry becomes a call for normalization. Instead of empowering the female voice with agency, the advertisement implies that the things women can do are firmly limited by their gender identity. What women can do, in other words, is placed within the context of a magazine replete with advice on how to please your man, make your marriage work, suggestions for fashion dos and don'ts, and beauty tips. Women "can do" shopping, hair-coloring, plastic surgery, and marriage maintenance. On the other hand, women can also be single working mothers, support their families and otherwise succeed in a "man's"

world -- as long as they use tampons. In either scenario, gender ambiguity is culturally managed and fixed gender norms remain intact. In the former case, women are limited to acting within the confines of a singular notion of femininity. In the latter explanation, the female body is controlled in order to perform masculinity. The strategy here, according to Douglas, is the physical elimination of the contradiction (40). Culture, in other words, chooses to erase the anomaly by killing it off.[10] The only way that women "can do" men's work is if they use tampons. The question of gender tension is eliminated because the symbol of womanhood is erased as a means to gain agency. More than merely a cultural taboo, menstruation is something that prevents (masculine) action.

The choice to resituate Rosie within the contemporary community as a tattooed woman complicates matters further because of the intersection between the history of Rosie the Riveter, the history of appropriating the image of the tattoo for marketing purposes, and the history of the working-class masculinity of the tattoo. The Tampax advertisement performs another surrogacy, therefore, with its appropriation of the arm tattoo onto a female body. In order to demonstrate the meanings circulating around and performed by the tattooed version of Rosie in the contemporary advertisement, therefore, the variety of histories the tattoo transmits and displaces first need to be exposed. I will narrate one of these histories by using another popular cultural advertising representation of a tattoo-adorned body as my interpretive nexus.

The Marlboro Man

The Marlboro Man of the mid 1950s provides a point of departure for a discussion of mid-century masculinity as it is expressed via the image of the tattoo. Many of the cultural gender norms referred to by the Rosie image are likewise manifested and subverted by the Marlboro Man advertising campaign in1956, which was also a brain child of Leo Burnett Inc. The Marlboro Man advertisement, for example, first produced the image of the tattoo in the context of advertising. The connection between the 1956 advertisement and the contemporary Tampax advertisement begins very simply, therefore, with the Leo Burnett agency's strategic use of the tattoo as a cultural signifier. In other words, both advertisements are instances where a tattoo is inscribed upon the image or representation of the human body and not onto the body itself. That, in addition to the fact that the image of Rosie refers to the mid-century and its cultural context, connects the historicity of the Tampax advertisement to the 1950s history of the Marlboro Man. Consequently, the Marlboro Man advertising campaign is a text critical to discovering the performative significance of the Tampax advertisement's appropriation of the tattoo.

In 1955, the Philip Morris company sought to expand their consumer base that was, prior to that time, largely female (Govenar, Introduction xxii). Leo Burnett Inc. was subsequently employed to "engineer an image change that would increase the appeal of Marlboros" (Govenar, Introduction xxiii). The result was the advertising campaign that introduced the now familiar image of the Marlboro Man. In a 1959 interview, an

executive with Leo Burnett commented that the agency "wished to show a man who, during some moment–some loose moment–got himself tattooed" (Govenar, Introduction xxii). The early advertisements, consequently, featured "tough he-men and cowboys" that "wore tattoos on the back of their hairy hands as they lighted a cigarette" (Steward 58).

The January 21, 1957 issue of Life magazine featured a three page version of the Marlboro advertisement. On the first page of the black and white layout, the Marlboro Man's head, neck, and upper chest are in the frame. Wearing a light colored cowboy hat, striped button-down shirt, western style sport coat and western style tie, he is lighting a cigarette with a Zippo style lighter with his right hand. The hand is in the foreground of the photograph and is decorated with a tattoo of the symbol of the American eagle. The heading above this image is "The Marlboro Man." The reader is invited to turn the page with the query "What's he like. . ." inscribed below the image and to the viewer's right. When the page is turned, the reader encounters a two-page layout of a series of snapshots of the Marlboro Man in outdoor settings posing most often with a horse. Each snapshot has a caption in quotation marks in which the Marlboro Man introduces himself.

> "I'm a rancher. Grew up in this part of the country..."
>
> "Own my own ranch...ride from one end to the other every day..."
>
> "I like the life a man leads out here...the good feeling of being your own boss."
>
> "Like to smoke, too. My brand's MARLBORO. In my book, it's a lot of cigarette."

> "It's got an easy-drawing filter that works just fine. Lets the real tobacco flavor come clean through, too. No huffin' or puffin' with this one."
>
> "And this flip-top box never mashes a one of your cigarettes. Keeps that loose tobacco out of a man's pocket, too..."
>
> "You know what they say about MARLBORO, don't you? 'You get a lot to like.' Well, that's how it is living on a ranch. You'd like that, too."

This advertisement constructs a persona for the Marlboro Man and, like the Tampax advertisement, endows the image with a voice. The narrative introduces the audience to the Marlboro Man's persona. The first three frames define the persona as a property owning, rugged individualist who is free to roam his land. The Marlboro Man is able to "ride from one end" of his land to the other "every day." The fourth frame forges the connection between this free spirited rancher and the act of smoking. The narrative line characterizes the Marlboro as "a lot of cigarette." The implication suggested is that bigger is always better. A man owning a large ranch and controlling his time could only be satisfied by an equally large cigarette experience. Size becomes a metaphorical expression of the masculine experience constructed by the advertisement.

Size is not the only defining characteristic of the space the Marlboro Man inhabits. The ranch is additionally open, rugged, and located in nature. For example, the first snapshot in the advertisement shows him sitting tall on a horse prancing in long grass. A barbed wire fence is immediately behind the horse and rider. A large open expanse of fields stretches out in the horizon beyond the fence and a patch of woods borders the field. In the second frame, he has dismounted the horse in what appears to be a clearing in a wooded area (perhaps near the bank of a small stream because of the

change in landscape from forest in the background to large boulders and rocks in the foreground). The change in scenery from field to forest implies that the wooded area bordering the first frame is also part of the property owned by the cowboy.

There is no indication that the Marlboro Man has any life whatsoever outside of his ranch; this is his sole behavioral vortex. There is also no suggestion that he suffers the constraints of urban or domestic life. For example, he wears no wedding ring. He has no ties to the private and feminine domain of home or domestic space (Duncan 128). The advertisement represents, therefore, a very specific time and space where the performance of the Marlboro Man is possible. As Bakhtin notes in his discussion of the chronotope, the intrinsic connection between time and space, nature in artistic form expresses the stretching out of time ("Chronotope" 249). The moment of freedom in nature encapsulated in the advertising image is, for the Marlboro Man, eternal.

The vortex of the ranch is notable because it symbolizes the desire of the middle class to free itself of the boundaries of the city. City centers were no longer optimal living spaces for the growing middle class. The privilege of the center of the city as the home of the social and cultural elite was being swiftly transformed as the middle class fled urban life in droves. Residents of the suburbs were young, married, affluent enough to seek a more leisured life, and desirous of the isolated, exclusive, and larger spaces of the suburbs (J. Gilbert 116).

The chronotope of the ranch is additionally significant because it creates a space that mid-century men could imagine as a site for the performance of masculinity.

Middle-class men were in search of a new identity because the assurance that being a man guaranteed masculinity was swept out from under them as they sat behind their desks next to women. Kimmel suggests that men's roles changed from property owners and family providers to consumers of popular culture imagery and, consequently, the concrete notion of "manhood" became the fluid norm of "masculinity":

> New definitions, for example, that indicated a historic shift in language–from manhood, the inner directed autonomous American producer, to masculinity, the set of qualities that denoted the acquisition of gender identity. While "manhood" had historically been contrasted with "childhood," to suggest that manhood meant being fully adult, responsible, and autonomous, the new opposite of "masculinity" was "femininity," traits and attitudes associated with women not children. (Kimmel, "Consuming Manhood" 21)

The distinction between masculine and feminine became increasingly difficult to manage after WWII when women entered the workforce and performed male labor. Middle-class man's role of economic provider was no longer physically enacted through hard, physical labor and land ownership. Once male identity lost its fixed character, masculinity needed to be actively constructed and that construct maintained. Middle-class male culture subsequently went on a search for masculinity and found it in the consumption of popular culture. For example, Early argues that the popularity of prize fighting in the mid-century was fueled by the middle-class male desire to fulfill a lack of manhood. In Early's discussion of the lives of Jake LaMotta and Rocky Graziano, both mid-century prize fighters, he indicates that both came from poverty, fought viciously, and wrote successful autobiographies that were eventually adapted to film.

The actors in the films, according to Early, "wound up aping on the screen the kind of mannerisms of the misunderstood, antisocial youth that Graziano cultivated in real life: Brando in the Wild One and On the Waterfront; Newman in Somebody Up There Likes Me and The Left-handed Gun; and Dean in Rebel Without a Cause" (90). Stereotypical performances of boxing and boxers became a way for middle-class men to reinvent notions of physical manhood (Early 87). In other words, behavior considered deviant in the streets became a celebration of masculinity in the ring.

The cowboy on the ranch in the Marlboro Man advertisement fulfills a similar function as the boxer in the ring for the middle-class man. The ranch is a romanticized, almost fantastical, place where men can be men. The space produces the possibility of emancipation from the constraints of urban or suburban life because of its size and its freedom from obstacles like the office and family. It is not the fighting ring, certainly, but it is a place designed for the expression of physical exertion. The cowboy in the advertisement manages his land by riding through it daily on a horse. This is a mystical, masculine place where the men are free, women are absent, and life is good.

Entering into this complicated mix of class and gender performances is the image of the tattoo located on the back of the Marlboro Man's right hand. The hand is active, productive, and instrumentally valuable. The tattoo and the composition of the advertisement highlight the hand by placing it in the left corner foreground of the frame actively lighting the cigarette. This is a strong position because of the natural tendency of Western readers to read from the left to right. Additionally, attention is drawn to the

tattoo because the hand lighting the cigarette is the active element of the image. The tattoo is a central feature of the image that kinesthetically refers to yet another complex cultural matrix composed of issues of deviance, class, and gender relations.

Following WWII, tattoos were increasingly associated with the social underclass in the U.S., largely because they were markers of non-conformity. Those who were adorned with conspicuous tattoos violated appearance norms and risked being defined as morally and socially inferior (Sanders 2). This is especially true of the hand tattoo. Hand tattoos are, at best, uncommon and are often associated with the most deviant of behaviors because they both connote a prior deviant act and cannot be hidden from the public eye. They exist in the most public of space, second only to facial tattoos. It is because of this very public location that some mid-century tattooists counseled against hand tattoos among their clientele. For example, Samuel Steward, a former college professor and tattoo artist in Chicago during the 1950s, writes about a client named "Paul." Apparently Paul was a compulsive consumer of tattoos. Steward cautioned Paul against getting his hands tattooed and referred to the tattooist who eventually tattooed Paul's hands as "unscrupulous"(Steward 63). Even Stoney St. Clair, a former carnival tattooist who began tattooing in the 1920s, regrets his hand tattoos because they make him "look like a show-off" (101). During the mid-century, therefore, hand tattoos were considered highly public space and either signified excessive display within the tattoo community or deviance to the general public. The tattoo on the hand of the Marlboro Man, therefore, opposed the norms of male tattoo display in everyday life performance

while simultaneously authorizing the Marlboro Man's performance as an icon of masculinity.

The connection between tattoos and criminality which began with scientific studies based on Caesar Lombroso's work continued into the 1950s. For example, Steward (a.k.a. Phil Sparrow), who happened to be a personal friend of Dr. Alfred Kinsey, reports that Kinsey advised social workers and psychologists "to spend at least five full days in a tattoo shop" before getting their degree (39). A New York policeman even went so far as to assert that a high proportion of murderers and rapists have tattoos and requested that more research be gathered investigating the nature of tattooed people (Govenar, Introduction xxiii). The use of tattoos by prisoners and gangs to signify group membership also participated in cementing the connection between tattooing and deviance. Tattooing was viewed by the middle-class as a "barbaric" practice of disreputable individuals (Polhemus 24).[11]

Another factor contributing to the classification of tattoos as deviant in the mid-twentieth century was an outbreak of hepatitis in the 1950's and early 1960's.[12] As a consequence of the disease, tattooing was banned in some states. Margo Mifflin argues that these bans secured tattooing's association with deviance because they constructed tattooing as an "outlaw" practice (38). Within the context of the Marlboro advertisement, "outlaw" is reconfigured as freedom from social regulation. The cowboy "in some loose moment" exercised his individuality. Of course, the Marlboro advertisement also has the cowboy costumed in a western-style suit, implying that his

youthful indiscretion has since been replaced by the culturally sanctioned practice of land-owning businessmen. The bodily freedom of expression the tattoo symbolizes is displaced to roaming the ranch and smoking "a lot" of cigarette.

Tattoos were not only associated with lower classes and deviant behavior but with masculinity as well. As Samuel Steward points out: "A tattoo allies its wearer–at least in his own mind–with the tough, the real, the macho. It represents the submerged desires of a large part of the male population. It leaves no doubt as to one's masculinity–according to the truckdriver [sic] with the bevy of girls decorating his pubic region" (57). As Steward's ironic tone illustrates, there is a very specific, lower-class, brand of masculinity that becoming tattooed performs.

Steward's evaluation is largely the result of his unique perspective on tattooing. Although Steward was a tattooist for eighteen years, he only entered the profession after becoming disillusioned with his twenty-year career as a professor of English. Additionally, Steward's book is the product of a journal he began writing at Kinsey's request. The purpose of the journal, which was sent to the Kinsey Institute in installments, was to transcribe Steward's impressions about the potential sexual motivations for getting tattooed (Pomeroy 2). In other words, Steward's ironic tone expresses not only his perspective as a tattooist, but also as an ivory tower ethnographer charged with a very specific and assumptive directive. The masculinity which tattooing performs, from the perspective of a college professor turned skidrow tattoo artist, is an underclass version of sexual possession and control (Steward 5).

The masculinity of the tattoo in the Marlboro advertisement is also derived from the citation of the authority of turn of the century illustrated men. Some of the early freak show performers were former sailors who had acquired their tattoos on sea voyages and, upon returning home, found that people would pay to gaze upon their tattooed bodies (Bogdan 241). The first western bodies associated with tattoos, then, were male bodies. The association between military service and tattooing continued in WWI and WWII as military men became inscribed with symbols of their military unit or more general images of patriotism such as the American flag. The American Eagle on the cowboy's hand quotes this history, even though the narrative in the advertisement does not mention a military career. As a result, the Marlboro cowboy's "loose moment" invites the reader to perform the potential narrative of a young sailor or soldier on a drunken leave meandering into a tattoo parlor with his buddies.

The tolerance of pain required for tattooing also participates in its masculine status. The vision of the tattoo as a performance of pain is present in the narratives surrounding the exhibition of the first illustrated men. The stories told by and about these human picture galleries were those of capture and torture at the hands of primitive cultures. Former circus clown Robert Sherwood, for example, offers the following description of the process of tattooing Barnum's Captain Costentenus: "Costentenus fell a victim of the tattooing needle through his Christian faith. Surely the Christian martyrs in the Roman arenas suffered no more than he. The pain must have been terrible, although not affecting the brain" (149). Likening the pain of tattooing to that of death by

lion may seem extreme by today's standards, but prior to the invention of the electric tattoo machine in the 1880s, tattooing was a process of hammering the ink into the skin (Govenar, Introduction xvi). From the earliest contexts of display, therefore, the tattooing process and the tattoo image have been linked to pain and manhood. This connection continues into the twentieth century because, as Kim Hewitt explains, the endurance of pain is "often considered crucial to gender construction and demonstration of toughness" (75). The spectacle of the Marlboro Man in the mid-century (as well as contemporary tattoo displays) consequently retains the kinesthetic memory of Costentenus' pain.

The Tampax Rosie the Riveter advertisement cites the complex history of the tattoo partly constructed and performed in the Marlboro Man advertising campaign. The Tampax advertisement cites the authority of the Marlboro Man advertisements of the 1950s not only because they are both mid-century bodies with tattoos in advertisements, but because of the placement of the tattoo on the arm of Rosie and its implications for the masculinity of tattoo display. Consequently, read within this discursive construction, the tattoo on Rosie's arm in the Tampax advertisement produces the image of masculinity because of the masculine connotation of the tattoo in general, as well as because of the intersection between the tattoo and the masculine and feminine signifiers present in the original Rosie the Riveter poster to which the advertisement refers.

Initially, the tattoo is placed on the highly masculinized arm (specifically the biceps) of Rosie. According to Clinton Sanders' research, "55 percent of the

questionnaire respondents received their first tattoo on the arm or hand (71 percent of the males and 19 percent of the females). Eighty-one percent (twenty-two) of the men's tattoos were on their arms" (48). Sanders' concludes that men are more likely to choose arm tattoos because of technical factors such as they are easier for the artist and because arm work is less painful (48). Regardless of the motivation, however, the presence of tattoos on male arms and not female arms has masculinized the arm tattoo. Additionally, the image celebrates a particular version of working-class masculinity and manual labor.

Furthermore, because of the separation between the head and body as feminine and masculine respectively on the WWII poster, the placement of the tattoo in a masculine region in the advertisement is merely an additional symbol of masculinity. It does not confront gender norms of display and control because it is not necessarily on the body of a woman. In other words, the tattoo on the arm cites the authority of the masculine codes of the body in the poster and the masculinity of tattoos in general and of arm tattoos specifically.

Finally, the context of the advertisement reduces the masculine/feminine tension. As my previous discussion of context suggested, the advertisement negates the gender tension because of the implications of the product advertised and the codes of the magazine. Unlike in the poster, which maintained gender tension by clearly separating the body and head, the advertisement begins to associate the two by valuing the masculine over the feminine. The masculine tattoo, therefore, merely reasserts that the

body of the woman can be successful in the workplace as long as she simulates masculinity. The body and the head of the poster remain separately coded as masculine and feminine, but the tension produced in the division between the head and body in the war poster are muted by context. The tattoo merely participates in this process as a symbol of yet another way the female body must be emancipated from her femininity.

UmJammer Lammy

There is, however, one more history to be told before drawing any final conclusions about the efficacy of the Tampax advertisement in reproducing or resisting gender norms. Where there is tattoo masculinity, the story goes, there is also tattoo femininity. The advertisement for Sony PlayStation's UmJammer Lammy (a video game) provides an entry point for the discussion of tattoos as a feminine code. My purpose here is to bring the discourse of advertising, gender, and the tattooed body into the late-twentieth century context with a photographic representation of a female tattooed body before returning to the illustrated form of Rosie the Riveter. I want to use the UmJammer Lammy advertisement as an entry point into the discourse of femininity surrounding female tattooed bodies throughout the century. Unlike Rosie, the female form in the Sony advertisement is a photograph of an already-tattooed woman's body and so is an example of how the female tattooed body (as opposed to an illustrated image of a female body) is constructed and represented in contemporary advertising. I believe this is important because the Tampax advertisement is both a surrogate of the "original" Rosie the Riveter (who was a surrogate of the 1940s female laborer), and of

the image of the mid-century tattooed body in advertising, but also of the image of the tattooed woman in the1990s.

The September 1999 issue of Ray Gun magazine carried the UmJammer advertisement. Ray Gun is published in Santa Monica, California, and this particular issue featured commentary about Seattle-based rock group Soundgarden in addition to a column written by rock music bad boy Kid Rock. The magazine also ran an article about the British girl group 21st Century Girls. The article's style and content indicate the general tenor of the magazine:

> 21st Century Girls (known previously as Teenage Rampage, until it was discovered that a porn website uses that name) is a blend of punk rock and manufactured teen pop–a hybrid that is unsettling, if not just really fucking weird. It's as if Joan Jett was run through the production machine behind Brittany Spears. (Fogelnest 25)

The magazine is an in-your-face hip/alternative perspective on music, film, and fashion catering to the image conscious, techno-savvy teen and twenty-something of the late twentieth century

The UmJammer Lammy advertisement appears on pages six and seven of the twenty-three page advertising onslaught at the beginning of the issue. The advertisement features the torso (from just below the breast line to the hips) of a woman wearing jeans and a red crop-top that reveals her stomach. The shirt is the same costume that her animated compadre wears in an illustrated box at the bottom of the advertisement. The woman's navel is pierced and surrounded by a black and gray tattoo design reading "THERE'S A NEW ROCK STAR IN TOWN." The written text of the advertisement

indicates that "Lammy" is "the guitar-slinging megastar of UmJammer Lammy, the new rock video game. Problem is, she's late for her big gig with Milk Can, her all-grrrl band. Save the day by jamming to rock, punk, pop, and other killer riffs" (Ray Gun 7).

The advertisement obviously cites the late twentieth-century discourse of "grrrl" power which, as indicated by the written text, is wrapped up in female rock star celebrity. According to Gilbert and Kile, the term "grrrl" was coined by punk rocker Kathleen Hanna and is "a spontaneous young-feminist reclamation of the word 'girl'" intended to "recall the naughty, confident and curious ten-year-olds we were before society made it clear it was time to stop being loud and playing with boys" (qtd. in Garrison). Garrison extends this notion when she argues that young women primarily linked with punk subculture in the United States and Great Britain have identified with the term and mobilized a grassroots feminist campaign. Garrison suggests that these young women claim "feminist agency for themselves" by making use of print and visual media, music genres, technologies, non-violent action, shock tactics, and the Internet. Moreover, a significant sign associated with "grrrl" power within the context of the advertisement is the tattoo located directly in the center of the image. As I hope I have made clear, American women have been adorning their bodies with tattoos for over a century. The history of inscribing tattoos upon female bodies is, therefore, part of the cultural authority upon which the performative force of this, as well as the Tampax, advertisement depends.

The history of the tattooed woman is one built around the eroticism of the exposed female form. The illustrated women who performed in freak shows at the turn of the century were eroticized on the stage by violating Victorian norms of appropriate levels of physical exposure. The illustrated woman's performance was, in some ways, culturally received as a unique version of a peep show or all-girl review:

> One reason for their appeal was that in order to show their tattoos, they had to expose parts of their bodies–their legs and thighs–which under any other circumstances would have been lewd if not illegal. This gave showmen a way of sliding a little bawdiness into the freak show tent, an act that both paralleled and facilitated the incorporation of hoochy koochy shows in the popular amusement industry. (Bogdan 251)

The women who performed in such acts were consequently judged, even by some of their cohorts, for their presumably lewd behavior. Illustrated woman Betty Broadbent, for example, took pains to distinguish herself from the "carnival floozies with one or two tattoos who would bump and grind" (qtd. in Mifflin 30). As a result of their flesh exposure, these women "sacrificed social respectability" (Mifflin 32). The conventions of the illustrated person's performance required that the illustrated woman reveal her body and, even though it was covered with tattoos, the very public act of being undressed was (and still is) erotic. This perception was reinforced because tattooed women covered themselves off stage. Mifflin suggests economic considerations motivated this move: "offstage, they covered themselves both to protect their work from the sun's damaging rays and to ensure that only paying customers took in the show" (Mifflin 23). It is tempting to take this explanation at face value. It makes sense that women who were willing to undress on stage would not suffer the social pressure to maintain decorum

once off stage. On the other hand, the body of the illustrated woman on stage was in a heightened communicative frame. She was staged in a "highly formalized and aesthetically elaborated performance form" with a specific set of rules articulated by the conventions of display (Bauman 46). The conventions required that the women wear very little clothing. Once the tattooed woman exited the stage and entered a new communicative frame, therefore, the rules for exposure changed. The desire to cover her body may have been to preserve her work and safeguard her employment, but the social ramifications of that act suggest that tattoo exposure was inappropriate in everyday interaction. If you wanted to see the body of the illustrated woman, you had to pay for it. Tattoos became a sign of sexual deviance because, like prostitutes and strippers, tattooed women's exposed bodies were purchasable commodities.

The association between women with tattoos and sexual desire continued into the mid-century. In an era where tattooed women no longer graced sideshow stages, however, the matter of public and personal space became transferred to the location of the tattoo on the female body. Steward's account of his tattooing business in Chicago between 1950-1965, for example, suggests that his male clientele viewed tattoos on hidden female body parts as highly erotic:

> Earl, a youthful gang member in Chicago, heavily tattooed, and looking fierce as a young Valentino with side-burns down to his jawline, one evening brought in his young wife and demanded that his name be put high on her leg. She was too embarrassed to lower her levis [sic] while I was present so I stepped outside. When I went back she had put on Earl's shirt and sat with her fat white thighs pressed close together. She yelled and squirmed a lot while I put on a small rose with Earl's name beneath.

> When it was done she stood up and Earl suddenly grabbed her from behind, naked lust in his eyes and gestures. If they had been alone he would have topped her there and then. (48-9)

Nor was this an isolated occasion in Steward's experience: "Over the years nearly a hundred men brought their women to have the man's name inscribed above the celestial gate, or on the gluteus maximus. After I had moved to California and been discovered by the Hell's Angels, I marked their women's breasts many time with 'Property of' followed by the member's gang-name" (49).[13]

Steward's narrative must always be read with his subjectivity and dual persona as tattooist and sex researcher in mind. Other female bodies were tattooed in the mid-century and not all because their men wanted them to.[14] What is interesting about the male subjectivity of his comment, however, is that it cites the turn-of-the-century history of the politics of display and concealment as an authorizing discourse for interpreting the mid-century female tattooed body. Moreover, the association between women with tattoos and sexuality, specifically sexual promiscuity, was clearly an image that permeated the mid-century American consciousness. The most compelling illustration of this association came when "a guilty verdict against a Boston rapist was overturned after a small butterfly was discovered on the leg of the victim" (Mifflin 39).

The implications of hidden vs. exposed tattoos in terms of sexuality and the eroticized female body continue to resonate in the late-twentieth century. One of the characteristics of the tattoo renaissance has been an increased number of middle-class women adorning themselves with tattoos. The key, however, is that these designs tend

to be coded as feminine because of their size, design, and location. Braunberger suggests that between the 1970s and 1990s, for example, the most popular designs for women tended to be "feminine" styles such as small hearts, flowers, and butterflies (15). Moreover, the placement of these designs tends to be on hidden flesh or flesh that has become, for the female body, sexually coded. For example, when lecturing about tattoos as a form of visual communication in an introductory communication course at a large university in the southern U.S., I led a discussion about gender. Without exception, students suggest that "feminine" tattoos are small and generally located on the breasts, stomach, lower back, ankles, and shoulder blades. Part of the explanation for this could be the late 1990's fashion trend for cropped tops revealing women's stomachs and lower backs. This trend merely confirms, however, that the stomach and lower back are highly sexualized and eroticized female body parts. Moreover, these areas are only visible when and if a woman chooses (or is forced) to reveal them. The implication is that female tattooed flesh is private space which, when strategically revealed, is erotic.

That sexuality has, as the UmJammer advertisement insinuates, also been recently transfigured into empowerment.[15] "Grrrls" are not sweet and innocent, nor are they pseudo-men. "Grrrls" rejoice in their female sexuality because they are in control. Part of this control is evident in the reclamation of the word "girl" from its pejorative subtext by "putting the growl back in our pussycat throats" (Gilbert and Kile qtd. in Garrison). Specifically, female actors like Angelina Jolie and Drew Barrymore flaunt their tattoos. Comedian turned fashion critic Joan Rivers even comments when Jolie wears clothing

that *covers* her tattoos. Girl power music groups like the Dixie Chicks wear tattoos on their exposed ankles. Even 1960s "I Got You Babe" sensation turned 1990s diva, Cher, sports multiple tattoos. These women, it could be argued, have become the illustrated women of modern popular entertainment but, instead of being ostracized for their tattoos, they are modeled by a generation of young women. The tattoo on these women appears to be an effort on the part of celebrities to appropriate the deviance of tattoo art. Tattoos on these women therefore become faddish signifiers of counter-cultural status, rebellion, and sexuality, drawing their meanings from the historical interpretations of the female tattooed body and recoding them on a contemporary celebrity body. Mifflin argues that this move successfully runs "roughshod over socially-sanctioned visions of femininity, flouting conventional expectations as well as those of some feminist factions" (Mifflin 100, 167). Braunberger additionally articulates this power of the visibility of the female tattooed form in terms of monster beauty. She asserts that women have found "transgressive opportunities" in tattoos that defy cultural proprietorship of the female body (15). Tattoos on celebrity females, therefore, appropriate the deviance of the lower class and masculine association. The power of their celebrity, however, alters that meaning by transforming deviance into power.

The UmJammer advertisement participates in this discourse with its desire to associate the animated video-game character with an attractive, sexual, tattooed, female body. The animated character, as a representative of "grrrls", is a "mega star" in a rock band. "Lammy" has asserted her position in the traditionally male-dominated rock music

industry. She has also asserted control over her body and sexuality with the tattoo and broken convention by staging the public display of that control. The problem with this scenario is that the body in the advertisement simultaneously conforms to norms of feminine tattoo display. She is adorned with a stomach tattoo that could just as easily be concealed as it is revealed. Moreover, this representation of "grrrls" is designed to sell a Sony video game. As a result, it participates in what Garrison calls the watering down of the political content of the movement by commodifying the "grrrl" image. The subcultural punk feminist is reduced to an animated video-game character who, as the advertisement's text indicates, "is late for her big gig" and needs to be "saved" by the video-game player. This representation of a female character who is stereotypically late and in need of help effectively negates the empowering rhetoric of feminist punk subculture in the 1990s.[16]

It is within this contemporary cultural context that the Tampax advertisement is displaced. Rosie's tattoo, on the one hand, declares that she, as a strong and powerful woman, can easily and publicly adopt a masculine image. The Rosie image, like the punk "grrrl," is liberated by "appropriating the objects, spaces, and aesthetics of a culture generally dominated and determined by men and male issues" (Garrison). At this level, the Tampax advertisement symbolizes the effort of women to break free of feminine norms and regain control over their bodies. In fact, the image is potentially even more powerful than the UmJammer depiction because it does not conform to the norms of feminine tattoo display. Just as Disneyland in Baudrillard's estimation represents a

hyperreal amalgamation of images of life in an American town which celebrates values and ideals that are only an imaginative cultural construction, Rosie the Riveter represents a synthesis of the image of 1940s female laborer and the contemporary tattooed female actor or rock star. As a pop culture icon and celebrity, therefore, Rosie performs a version of WWII "grrrl" power.

On the other hand, however, "grrrl" power is yet again commodified. The representation successfully reinvents the female tattooed form, therefore, when it appropriates a masculine symbol upon a female body within the cultural context of female empowerment. It fails because the context of mainstream media and advertising simply cannot evoke the "grrrl" ethic without normalizing consequences.

Conclusion

It is tempting at this point to declare that one out of three isn't bad. Read within the context of female empowerment the tattooed female body resists normative discourse. The advertisement does gain some authority from the rearticulation of tattoos as a symbol of sexual deviance into a symbol of female empowerment despite the fact that the advertisement is for tampons and that it represents an already masculine coded body over-inscribed with an additional symbol of masculinity. Unfortunately, however, the rhetoric of female empowerment cannot be separated from the representational context. In the end, the inscription of the tattoo upon the image of Rosie the Riveter reinforces the gender coding of the tattooed body by placing a masculine tattoo on a body already understood as masculine as well as placing that image within the

representational context of a tampon advertisement in a women's magazine. The effect of female empowerment is, like the gender tension of the war poster, muted by the controlling force of context. Females are empowered because of tampons and their ability to perform socially coded feminine behaviors such as shopping and pleasing their men.

In addition, the advertisement fails to construct a tattooed Rosie as a productive image of female empowerment because Rosie is not a real woman but an illustrated surrogate for womanhood. At this level, I question the efficacy of empowerment discourse for the woman who is neither an illustration nor a celebrity. In other words, these images do not reflect the reality of the tattooed woman who "must face other women still trapped" by the spell of culture's claim upon their bodies (Braunberger 15). Even UmJammer Lammy fails to break this spell because she, like Rosie, is not "real" but a video game character.

Despite its shortcomings, however, the Tampax advertisement does suggest some potential strategies for representing the female tattooed body that could resist reproduction. A lesson learned from the potential of space realized at the tattoo convention can, for example be translated in terms of representational context. The power of the weakly classified threshold space of the tattoo convention implies that the when the strength of boundaries weakens, the potential for resistance enters space. Similarly, weakened contextual boundaries may offer the potential for the tattooed body to resist reproduction. The Tampax advertisement is strictly bound within the context of

the tampon advertisement as well as the woman's fashion magazine. These are strongly coded frames or, in terms of the spatial analogy, strongly classified space. Displacing the image into a representational frame with weaker codes, therefore, may open up the potential for resistance.

The second option is to displace a strongly coded image like Rosie into a similarly strongly coded representational frame that opposes the codes implied by the image. For example, displacing the Rosie image into a men's magazine such as Men's Health or a tattoo publication like Skin and Ink may produce a very different reading of the image. In the former case, the advertisement would be contextualized by a magazine featuring articles on the maintenance of the male body and how to please one's woman in bed. The image of Rosie with a tattoo may then be read as an example of the male inability to grasp the totality of female experience. On the other hand, it might be perceived as yet another female invasion into masculine territory. In either case, the tensions are exposed rather than elided. Within the latter frame, the Tampax advertising may even take on a parodic quality because it would be read against images produced within the tattoo community. The readership may see the advertisement as a superficial and humorous effort by the mainstream community to appropriate images from their community only to end up revealing their laughable inability to do so. The image consequently becomes a parody. Moreover, positioning the tattooed Rosie against a photograph of a heavily tattooed body on a contest stage may lead to a questioning of

the politics of the construction of Rosie as a tattooed woman as well as of the appropriation of the tattoo image to sell tampons.

These potential repositionings of the advertising image activate the possibility of what Hutcheon refers to as postmodern photographic critique:

> Reappropriating existing representations that are effective precisely because they are loaded with pre-existing meaning and putting them in new and ironic contexts is a typical form of postmodern photographic complicitous critique: while exploiting the power of familiar images, it also de-naturalizes them, makes visible the concealed mechanisms which work to make them seem transparent, and brings to the fore their politics. (44)

Within these potential new contexts, the meaning of the "original" Rosie image is empowered because it is so strongly coded. Rather than drowning out oppositional readings, therefore, the force of the authority the image recalls is parodically confronted by the strength of the discourse authorized by the new context.

Finally, a lesson can be learned from the punk feminist strategy of avoiding the mainstream media. These young feminists have recognized the normalizing influence of the mainstream media and so have chosen to search for alternative contexts. Tattoo enthusiasts, similarly, have congregated at tattoo conventions and purchase tattoo magazines and illustrated books. In the next chapter, therefore, I return again to a context of production internal to the tattoo community and look at representations of tattooed people in neo-tribal books. The tattooed body in the neo-tribal books provides an example of a representational context that straddles the line between the tattoo convention, which is designed primarily for a tattooed audience, and magazine advertising, which targets a mass audience. Neo-tribal books are produced by tattooed

people for tattooed people but are also on the shelves at your local bookstore. Unlike the tattooed body at the convention that manipulated dominant discourse for its own ends, or the tattooed body in advertising that was imprisoned by its discursive context, the tattooed body in the final case study demonstrates the potential of the tattooed body to resist reproduction through its construction and subsequent authorization of its own imagined historical context.

Notes

1. McLaren additionally suggests that the body is particularly implicated by the process of signification, a process he refers to as the "cultural tattooing of the body" (61). He argues, furthermore, that culture is inscribed on the body by the fashion industry and that this logic becomes corporealized in our behaviors in what he calls "styles of the flesh" (61).

2. Considering the increasing popularity (or at least visibility) of tattoos among celebrities during the tattoo renaissance, it is not unusual that models with tattoos would become a more prominent presence in advertising campaigns. These bodies, of course, are also produced within a specific visual context that constructs a distinct discursive construction. I will return to this later in the chapter but, for example, a Guess advertisement uses the tattooed male body in order to refer to discourses of mid-century masculinity. The Guess model is shirtless, wearing Guess jeans and standing at a 3/4 profile to the camera. His bare back and upper right arm are adorned with tattoo images nostalgic of old-school tattoo design most often attributed to Sailor Jerry. Namely, a bikini-clad woman wearing high heels whose hairstyle, bikini, and shoes are all reminiscent of the mid-century. The model also has short, dark hair which is slicked back James Dean style and the patch on the jeans reads "workwear." The Guess advertisement, consequently, is a clear appropriation and reference to gender discourse in its construction of tattoos as a symbol of masculinity of the good old days.

3. My point is not that fashion models are merely hangers for clothing. They are chosen for the image that they project upon the product. Rather, my position is that the body used in non-fashion advertisements seeks to link fashion or contemporary style trends to products not conspicuously linked to the fashion industry.

4. For the most part, the fashion advertisements (Mossimo, Polo, and Clavin Klein in particular) tend to display male tattooed bodies. The tendency to masculinize the

tattooed body is one that I will address in this analysis but through the appropriation of the masculine image upon a female body.

5. Perhaps the most pedestrian example of gendered social space is the public restroom and the quandary the "male" and "female" designators pose to a transgendered and/or transsexual individual. Another instance of this is the gendering of nurseries through decor (blue or pink) based on the sex of the baby.

6. As West and Zimmerman point out, however, gender articulation (or misarticulation) is not always apparent (24-25).

7. There is no exact date for the poster (Dabakis 200).

8. Kathy Peiss suggests in her discussion of leisure and labor at the turn of the century until 1920, for example, that "the saleslady's patina of style and refinement differentiated her from the rougher manner of many tobacco or garment workers" (Cheap Amusements 47)

9. The October 1, 1923, cover of Life Magazine depicted a finelt made-up woman in high heels, flowing dress with lacy apron, and long curly hair pinned up riding a vacuum cleaner. The illustration was titled "A Modern Witch."

10. Douglas was referring to cultural practices that actually kill anomalous humans and animals, but I think the analogy to a metaphorical death within a representational economy is compelling.

11. The parallel trend for soldiers and sailors to symbolize group membership via tattooing was also becoming coded as deviant by the military as it sought to regulate the activity (Govenar, "Introduction" xxi).

12. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see Chapter Two.

13. Steward's experience is, of course, with a specific class of male clientele who, it seems, perceived tattooing as a masculine expression of ownership and control over their female partners. It is significant, nonetheless, because during this era tattooing was largely a lower-class practice and so cultural interpretations of tattoos and tattooing were formed within and in response to this community.

14. Margo Mifflin offers a very comprehensive descriptive analysis of women and tattoos throughout the twentieth century in the U.S. in Bodies of Subversion.

15. Tattoos on celebrities are so prevalent that MTV even noted the trend in a year-end countdown of the top nine trends of 1999.

19. Garrison indicates in her essay that the young women of this movement recognize the ineffectiveness of mainstream media in communicating their message and so rely mainly on alternatives like the Internet, punk music, and zines. My point is, however, that the mainstream media has co-opted the image in order to efface the power of the subcultural message. Punk feminists, as a result, suffer the same fate as Hebdige suggests punk (anti)fashion endured in Britain.

CHAPTER FOUR
MODERN PRIMITIVES

In 1989 Re/Search Publications released V. Vale and Andrea Juno's collection of interviews, illustrations, and photographs entitled Modern Primitives. Modern Primitives presents modern primitivism to the viewer/reader as a revival of "primitive" body modification practices -- tattooing, piercing, scarification -- in order to achieve the "desire for, and the dream of, a *more ideal society* [emphasis in original] " (Vale and Juno 4). Vale and Juno's volume capitalizes on the popularity of the "strikingly graphic tribal work that has thrived since the 1960s" (Lautman 21). Because of Modern Primitives and other publications like it, tribal tattoo designs signify more than an artistic style. It was during the 1980s, for example, that "tribalism" became a "buzzword" representing a "weird sort of snobbery among people who get black pattern tattooing. Some of them take the attitude that their tattoos are somehow more refined or pure" (Hardy, "Current Events" 200).

Vale and Juno's volume was a significant force in this redefinition of tattooing. According to DeMello, Modern Primitives was, for many readers, "the impetus not only to get tattooed but to get tattooed with non-Western designs. Further, readers were encouraged to see in their tattoos a primal instinct and even a physical force" (Bodies of Inscription 176). As a result, modern primitivism was brought into the "mainstream tattoo community" (DeMello, Bodies of Inscription 174). Modern Primitives, therefore, marked a pivotal transition for the meaning of tattooing in general and tribal designs in particular in the United States.

In the decade following its publication, Modern Primitives spawned a series of books espousing the modern primitivist philosophy. The Customized Body (1996) and Return of the Tribal (1997) articulate the modern primitivist philosophy through written text (essays and interviews) interspersed with photographs and illustrations. Like Modern Primitives, these texts suggest that the revival of forms of "primal" body modification represent a "return to values, practices, and ways of thinking that were born in shamanic societies of old" (Camphausen 5). Modern Primitives, The Customized Body, and Return of the Tribal are, consequently, important texts influencing and participating in the contemporary construction of the meaning of tattoos as a symbol and tattooing as a practice.

In this chapter I argue that the modern primitive body in these texts is the product of the process of exoticism and is subsequently empowered to resist reproduction. I indicate, furthermore, that the historicity of late twentieth-century performances of the modern primitive exotic as constructed in these texts recalls three distinct citational chains: the imagined history of the "tribal," the history of the side-show, and the marginalized working-class history of the tattooed body in the mid-century. In the end, I suggest that it is the tension among these authorizing discourses that produces the transgressive potential of the exotic body of the tattooed modern primitive.

The production of the exotic provides the interpretive frame for the analysis of these texts. The structures which constitute exotics and the process of exoticism revolve around displacement, detachment, combining sameness with difference, the

superimposition of multiple meanings, and the performative production of its own meaning in representation (Mason 147-164). Exotics, as I indicated in Chapter One, are not merely the product of the desire to produce a cultural "other" by dislocating a cultural object from one locale and placing it in another. Exoticism, rather, is a process of producing the meaning of an object within a new context. As Mason argues:

> It is not the "original" geographic or cultural contexts which are valued, but the suitability of the objects in question to assume new meanings in a new context. In this respect, exoticist representation can be seen as the opposite of Said's "Orientalisms"; although the latter fetishizes authoritative knowledge and geographic specificity, often with a view to actual domination, exoticist representation is indifferent to ethnographic or geographic precision and tends to serve imaginative rather than concretely political ends. (3)

The force of the exotic body's performativity, its felicity, therefore lies in its citation of an authorizing cultural discourse and prior cultural performance that is in flux; it is an *imagination* of a cultural performance produced by the very process that it authorizes. The exotic, like gender and class, is produced through its performance: it is the result of the process of exoticism (Mason 1-2).

The process is, furthermore, dependent upon the representational context. The performance of exoticism will mean differently in different representational contexts because the nature of the exotic is to assume new meanings in new contexts. The performative power of the exotic is its ability to shape-shift. It displaces the transmission of its meaning depending on the context of representation. It cannot, consequently, be pinned down by any one set of discourses.

In order to establish the modern primitive tattooed body as an exotic phenomenon, and to discuss the resistant and recuperative performative power of its

representation, I follow three lines of analysis. Initially, I argue that the form and content of the three texts under consideration create an imaginative history of primitive culture from which they gain cultural authorization. The performative force of modern primitive discourse does not rely upon any "real" cultural performance but rather upon an image of a cultural performance of a geographically vague "tribalism". These texts enact the performative process of exoticism to produce and cite this imagined cultural authority.

Secondly, I argue that the modern primitive constructed by these texts is additionally authorized by the historical trajectory of the early century sideshow performances of the illustrated body. I contend that the texts rehearse and reconstruct exotic modes of presentation that partly characterized the display of the tattooed body on sideshow stages. In so doing, modern primitive discourse performatively resurrects and inverts discourses of the primitive advanced by the scientific community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Finally, I suggest that modern primitive discourse, in its attempt to construct an identity category, produces the working-class tattooed body as a site of disidentification because of the effort to erase and/or recontextualize tattooing's working-class history. The working-class tattooed body, subsequently, defines the modern primitive precisely because it is the constitutive other to that body. Modern primitives cannot exist without the possibility of the working-class body.

Imagined Histories

The tattooed modern primitive is an exotic body in the process of exoticism. This process occurs within the representational format of Modern Primitives, The Customized Body, and Return of the Tribal. The process of exoticism enacted by these texts' representations of the modern primitive body creates the imagined history of the "tribal." Performances of modern primitives therefore gain their authority through the citation of that fabricated history. Moreover, the modern primitive is, before anything else, a body in transformation. The modern primitive body, therefore, is elusive because its source of authority does not exist prior to representation, and it only exists in its process of creation.

Modern Primitives, The Customized Body, and Return of the Tribal combine written text with illustrations and photographs of Western and non-Western/"tribal" bodies. The "tribal" bodies are often nude, and adorned with a combination of tattoos, piercings, and scarification. The combination of these images with images of Western bodies and written text produces modern primitivism. The following interpretation of these books as performances of modern primitivism, accordingly, pays special attention to the textual rhetoric, the form of photographic representation of the modern primitive and "tribal" body, and the histories imaginatively remembered and created in those representations.

Modern Primitives

Fakir Musafar

Fakir Musafar is the self-proclaimed originator of the term "modern primitive". Vale and Juno choose the text of their interview with Musafar as the first chapter of the book and also use photographs of Musafar to frame the beginning and the ending of Modern Primitives. Musafar's body, his ideas, and perspectives are the interpretive frame provided for the readers as they navigate the world of the text. To a large extent, therefore, Musafar's representation performatively constructs the imagined "tribal" culture that authorizes much of the modern primitive discourse in the text. Throughout the thirty-page interview with Musafar, the reader encounters a variety of images juxtaposing his white body with images and photographs of so-called "primitive" bodies. The "natives" pictured represent a variety of different cultures. They also display multiple practices of body modification.

The following description of one page of the interview illustrates how the rhetoric and composition of the text constitutes the representational effect of the exotic modern primitive body and the imagined construction of "tribal" culture. On this particular page, Musafar is asked about the basis for his tattoo designs. His response begins to create the multiplicity of the modern primitive body and of "tribal" authority:

> Inner visions. Similar, I suppose, to Balinese textile patterns that came from altered states and trips to another world. Same for the one on my back. Any tattoo that didn't come from inside you is not for you. Sometimes the artists in primitive cultures were shamans. They envisioned the marks, tattooed them on the body, and then the person who got the tattoo was whole. It was their pattern, their mark, and without that mark, they were incomplete. That's part of the magic of the tattoo. (Modern Primitives 8)

Musafar suggests that tattoos simultaneously reflect and construct tribal identity. The mark of the tattoo, as envisioned by the spiritual leader of the community, finalizes the form of the body as an expression of individual and community identity. Tattoos, far from being an imposition inscribed upon the natural body, consummate the spirit/body relationship. Rhetorically constituted in this manner, adaptation of aesthetic tribal tattooing practices becomes a realization of individuality rather than an appropriation of aesthetic imagery. Tattoos are, furthermore, magical. Their ability to alter or transform the individual defies explanation. This rhetoric attempts to disconnect the tattoo from its heritage as a sign of a particular social position by arguing for its ability to transcend rational logic. Instead of being either an artistic form or a signifier of social status, therefore, the tattoo is a supernatural agent.

Modern primitive tattooing, as explained by Musafar, becomes an embodied expression of Bakhtin's concept of aesthetic seeing. In "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity," Bakhtin describes the connection between the "I" and the "other" in the aesthetic act as being one of an excess of seeing. This excess is largely connected to the exterior surface of the body, according to Bakhtin, because one's own body cannot be experienced by the self as an exterior form ("Author and Hero" 85). Consequently, form is created in the act of contemplation of an other and that act is inherently productive ("Author and Hero" 24). The process of aesthetic contemplation suggests that aesthetic activity occurs when the self enters into the "Being" of the other and, upon returning to the self, gives form to the individuality (Bakhtin, Towards a Philosophy

of the Act 14). For the modern primitive, then, the tattoo artist as tribal shaman produces the body as an aesthetic expression of interior subjectivity.[1]

Concrete dichotomies of self/other, mind/body, subjectivity/objectivity dissolve in this act as the contingency of these positions becomes produced in both process and aesthetic product; these relationships cease "to be founded on a necessary principle" (Bakhtin, "Author and Hero" 5). The modern primitive body is an expression of identity cooperatively produced and realized in the act of production. The aesthetic body is not only produced in its representation, however. Its production also detaches it from any specific location or origin. The body is both the product of the self and the other, both the expression of internal subjectivity and external representation, both modern and primitive. The process of creating the modern primitive is indicative of an essentially human and interactive, rather than culturally specific and appropriative, condition.

The performative composition of the modern primitive is also visually enacted. On the same page that this explanation of the power and purpose of "primitive" practices of tattooing occurs, appear two photographs of "native" people with tattoos. One photograph shows a woman sitting cross-legged on the ground and cradling an infant in her lap. Her short-sleeved white Western-style blouse appears too small for her and is completely unbuttoned, revealing her breasts. Her entire body, face, and hands are covered in a solid black line abstract tattoo design. The caption reads: "Papua New Guinea woman with tattoos" (Modern Primitives 8). Next to this photograph appears a picture of the thighs of a kneeling person who looks to be pulling up some

kind of garment to reveal the horizontal black line tattoos adorning the thighs. The caption of this picture reads: "Eskimo Indian with tattoos made by pulling sooty thread through skin" (Modern Primitives 8). The mixture of photographic cultural references on this page represents "part of the theater" that produces (modern primitive) identity (Krauss 174). The page becomes the stage upon which modern primitive identity is produced through interaction amongst multiple photographic images of tribal character types. Consequently, the photographs demonstrate Phelan's claim that photographs subjectively create an image that performatively expresses the reality of bodies (36). The image created on this page invents the reality of modern primitive identity on its photographic stage. In other words, photography as a representational form produces the modern primitive. Modern primitive identity is thus exotic because it "is not originally located somewhere else and then secondarily reflected in representations. Rather, it is the product of those very representations, produced through the process of exoticism" (Mason 160).

Margo DeMello argues that this strategy of visual and narrative comparison between modern primitive bodies with tribal imagery succeeds for Modern Primitives in making explicit the connection between tattooing and primitive people and practices (Bodies of Inscription 176). The performative effect of the composition of the text, however, dissolves that connection because what it ultimately succeeds in doing is producing an image of "tribal" culture and "primitive" practices that is *not* culturally specific. The form of the text creates an exotic image, a "realia," which is not culturally or geographically specific (Mason 159). Far from locking the body in a prison of

appropriation, a claim supported by Orientalism, Mason argues that this imprecision "is more evocative and flexible than the specificity of a precise location in space" (159). The composition of these texts, therefore, is authorized by an image, an ephemeral surrogate, of multiple prior cultural performances.

This imagined community of the "tribal" is then hailed by the Western body of Musafar as his authorizing discourse in his reenactment of "primitive" practices. Musafar says, for example, that his body expresses the modern primitive desire of a "non-tribal person" to respond to "primal urges" and to do "something with the body" (Modern Primitives 13). The power of this body to resist domination lies, consequently, in its location in the open space between two worlds, one ancient and imagined and the other modern. As Kobena Mercer indicates, incommensurable polarities such as ancient and modern produce a disruptive effect that "delivers the viewer's response to a liminal place of voluptuous indeterminacy" (198). The distinction between ancient and modern is, in other words, untenable. Because identity cannot be satisfactorily captured by either category, the body will always remain in the seductive space of the in-between.

The complex combination of multiple non-Western cultural references visually and verbally present on this one page of the interview with Musafar demonstrates the cultural multiplicity of superimposed images upon the modern primitive body of Musafar. He is both the product and the producer of a conglomeration of cultural practices and images which, taken together, constitute the imaginary "tribal" culture that

the modern primitive cites. In other words, he is the modern primitive product of the process of modern primitivism.

Leo Zulueta

The interview with Leo Zulueta is also important to Modern Primitives' construction of tattooing as an exoticist practice (96-100). Although the interview with Zulueta is a mere four pages compared to Musafar's thirty, Zulueta is a tattoo artist and collector who has been a significant force in the popularization of "primitive" tattoo design (Modern Primitives 97; DeMello, Bodies of Inscription 86; Lautman 21). His ideas and his body, moreover, are specifically dedicated to the art and practice of tattooing. In the text, Zulueta's physical form is juxtaposed against drawings of Micronesian designs.

The expansive Micronesian tattoo design featured in Zulueta's photograph covers nearly his entire back. Upon turning the page, the reader encounters the tribal juxtaposition in the form of a graphic representation of similar Micronesian body tattoos "from an early 1900's article" (Modern Primitives 98). The illustrations are black ink drawings similar in design to Zulueta's back. The drawings are sketched on an outline of a human body. Zulueta explains the lack of a photographic depiction of Micronesian tattooing in the accompanying interview text:

> The last man to have a back piece like mine, who was over 90 years old, passed away a couple years ago. This is why I really feel strongly about preserving those ancient designs; besides being original art, they might be talismans for the future, or perhaps encode some cryptic knowledge that could be valuable or illuminating in some way–who knows? But if they're not preserved, we'll never know. (Modern Primitives 99)

Zulueta self-reflexively identifies the cultural memory his body kinesthetically imagines. At the same time, he increases the distance between modern primitive practices and any geographically or culturally specific group because he suggests that these practices are no longer performed in the cultures where they originated. Zulueta's body, in its preservation of the sign of the Micronesian tattoo, also displaces that sign upon a non-Micronesian body. The image and the body are reconfigured from being either Micronesian or not-Micronesian (the polarity inherent to the logic of appropriation) into the body of the modern primitive which is both and neither. In other words, the practices of this modern primitive rehearses the disappearance of the practice in Micronesia as well as produces the disappearance of Zulueta's unmarked and non-Micronesian body.

Moreover, Zulueta suggests that the signifying potential of his body is open. His body may, for example, be the vessel for some as yet unknown source of knowledge. The point is not that the meaning of his body will someday be discovered, but that its current meaning is indecipherable because of our inability to read its signs. Like an ancient language for which we have no dictionary, Zulueta's body may provide us with answers to questions we have yet to ask but for our inadequacy to unlock the code. Additionally, the language is not dead because it lives on/in Zulueta. Unlike the "natural" body whose code is easily accessed, therefore, Zulueta's tattooed body's meaning is indeterminate.

Margo DeMello argues that Zulueta's rhetoric is an attempt to justify cultural appropriation (Bodies of Inscription 87-8). DeMello suggests that Zulueta's physical

adoption of the Malaysian images is similar to the practice of taking objects from a culture and putting them on display as artifacts in another. The source culture is, in this scenario, objectified and normalized by a (usually) Western oppressor. The difference between the process DeMello describes and Zulueta's practice is, however, that Zulueta's corporeal body is permanently altered. He becomes the object of display. Zulueta's body produces modern primitive identity, in other words, by acting as a cultural surrogate for the Micronesian body. In this sense, Zulueta's body cannot be easily identified as a symbol of simple cultural appropriation because he is not a representation of either culture; he is both.

The other tattoos on Zulueta's body further contest the representation of Zulueta as the vessel of appropriation. Zulueta's arms are tattooed in "tribal" style but they are of no specific cultural origin. Zulueta explains: "I told Ed I wanted to get a big tribal-style flame on my right arm. He said, 'You draw it, bring it to me, and I'll put it on.' That was in 1978. Then I got the matching piece on my left arm in early 1981" (Modern Primitives 98). The specificity of cultural authority which, according to Said, suppresses the source culture is problematized because there is no single source that is being appropriated. The layers of meaning heaped upon Zulueta's body resist the logic of appropriation because they beg the question of what culture is victimized: is it the imagined culture created by the combination of cited "tribal" signifiers, or is it Zulueta whose body has been (permanently) claimed by the images?

Return of the Tribal

Return of the Tribal's composition is similar to Modern Primitives. The major distinction is that the primary written text is not interview-based but the author's effort to "show that the impulse to shape one's body and one's self in one's own desired image, far from being something only for social outcasts, seems as intrinsic to being human as are (self)consciousness, art, communication, and sexuality" (Camphausen 2). To that rhetorical end, the book is divided into seven chapters that combine written text and photographs of primarily Caucasian tattooed and pierced Western bodies set against photographs of "tribal" people exhibiting a variety of styles of body modification.

Return of the Tribal makes a conscious effort to place photographic images of the modern primitive or neo-tribal body up against photographs of "tribal" people. This style of photographic presentation begins in the Introduction. The layout of pages six and seven, for example, show typed text against a white background on the left and a colorful photo layout on the right. The top of the right page is covered by a photograph (about 5"x6") of the head and face of a dark-skinned "Hadendawa" woman wearing large, gold hoop earrings and a gold hoop nose-ring through the front of her right nostril. She is wearing what appear to be two shawls over her head, the orange material of one partly obscuring the turquoise of the second.

The Hadendawa female is juxtaposed to an image of an apparently white woman's torso on the lower right corner of the page. This woman, appearing in a smaller photograph, is turned so that her back and the left profile of her face are visible. Her long wavy black hair hangs loosely over her right shoulder to suggestively reveal

her neck and her left ear. She has two tattoo designs. The first image extends from just behind and below her left ear down her back to just below the shoulder blade. The other design runs down her left arm from her shoulder to at least her elbow (the photograph is cut off just above her elbow line). Both designs are composed of solid black sculptural lines typical of neo-tribal designs (Chinchilla 47).

Below the upper photo and to the left of the lower photo is the following text:

> Identity and Freedom
> A golden ring in the front of the right nostril is the trade-mark of Hadendawa women, whereas other Beja–all Muslim and heavily veiled–wear different types of nose-rings, as with other tribes across the world, people's adornments are often determined by being born into a particular tribe. Such restraints do not exist for people in non-tribal societies. The elegant and unusual tattoos befitting the elegant lady at right is a design truly unique to herself. (Camphausen 7)

The combination of the written text and the visual image asks the reader to make the connection between the tattooed woman and the "native" Hadendawa woman.

Moreover, the caption of the written insert, like Musafar's rhetoric, draws a connection between the modern primitive performance of self and the Western valuation of autonomy. Unlike tribal culture, neo-tribal identity is not a genealogical imperative; it is a choice. Modern primitive and neo-tribal selves refer to the images of tribal practices but reconstitute them through displacement into the Western cultural context privileging individuality. The style of narrative description in the written text reinforces the displacement. When describing the Hadendawa woman, Camphausen's language is denotative and seemingly objective; she merely exists. Her neo-tribal counterpart, on the other hand, is "unique," "unusual," and "elegant." Neo-tribal performance creatively alters ritual markers of tribal membership aesthetically because

modern primitives are free to modify design in order to heighten their individuality. The affiliative element of adornment is not, however, completely recuperated by the neo-tribal surrogation. Neo-tribal is also an identity category and the choice to adorn oneself in that style (solid, black line) marks membership within that group. Displaced within the juxtapositional context of The Customized Body, "tribal" body modification practices become a creative assertion of individual identity as well as expressions of group affiliation.

The review of Return of the Tribal by Publishers Weekly printed on the back cover describes this visual form of the text as a juxtaposition of "photos of modern urban tribals against images of indigenous people" that "effectively places this oh-so '90s practice firmly within a historical and global context." The historical and global context, however, lack specificity. The tattoo designs etched upon the Western body are identified as "tribal" because of their general aesthetics, not because of their reference to a specific culture or cultural ritual. Additionally, the juxtaposed images do not feature similar body modification practices. The "tribal" body is pierced and the neo-tribal body is tattooed. The layout and text suggest that the modern woman's body is somehow spiritually connected to the Hadendawa woman through generic aesthetics of adornment. The text also suggests a distinction, however, because "restraints do not exist for people in non-tribal societies." The juxtaposition of images invites both comparison and contrast and so highlights the difference between the contemporary woman and the Hadendawan woman while drawing a connection between the two. Moreover, the text implies that the Hadendawan woman is a representative stand-in for

"other tribes across the world." The Hadendawan woman surrogates all tribal cultural performances. The Western woman then surrogates her aesthetically. The neo-tribal exotic is thus thrice detached from a specific culture. The modern primitive produced by the juxtaposition, consequently, is a hybrid effect of the practice of representation and not of cultural conflict and appropriation.

The Customized Body

The Customized Body features photographs and interviews by Housk Randall and text by Ted Polhemus. The book is separated into nine sections, each dealing with a different form of body adornment that demonstrates the human effort to "find more ingenious ways of transforming their flesh into art" (Polhemus 9). Each section opens with a descriptive and interpretive history of the practice under consideration before displaying black and white photographs of mostly nude individuals participating in the practice. The juxtaposition between the contemporary and the "tribal" within this text is narratively, rather than visually, constructed. In the written text, tribal culture is valorized and its tattooing practices argued to be a celebration of stability and ritual. The segment dedicated to tattooing and scarification begins, for example, with a narrative discussing the origin of the word "tattoo". It provides archeological evidence of Neolithic tattooing, explains the role of tattooing for "our ancestors," denigrates mid-century interpretations of tattooing in the West, and celebrates the tattoo renaissance's "new awareness" of non-Western cultures and "new appreciation" for body decoration resulting in the choice to transform the body (Polhemus 23-4).

The "original" tribal body is completely absent from the performance of the exotic and erotic neo-tribal body, except in theory. Like the comparisons produced by the previous texts, the narrative comparison in The Customized Body produces the modern primitive as a hybrid. The modern primitive body is over-written by the discourse of tribal ritual and the discourse of choice (in addition to being physically transformed). The customized body's referent is, however, a *completely* discursive construction. The body of the "tribal" source is not visually present in the text. In its place, we are given the photographic image of the modern primitive surrogate; a modern Western body constructed by a combination of signs representing multiple cultural practices. This surrogate, furthermore, is authorized by an imagined cultural discourse.

One of these photographs pictures the volume's photographer, Housk Randall. He is bare-chested and posed against a black background at a three-quarter angle to the camera. A tattoo covers the bulk of his upper right arm and shoulder. The caption reads:

> This tattoo is a visual representation of my life's path. The snake and the sun are Aztec designs–I'm half Mexican–symbolizing rebirth and wisdom through the undergoing of suffering and near-death experience. It can be read not only as a passage from darkness to light but also as a symbol of sexuality and life. . .the sperm into the ovum. (32)

Randall's discourse disperses tribal culture. The Aztec symbol of near-death experiences is refashioned as erotic and sexual. Randall produces his own meaning through this discourse. He makes his body meaningful by uttering a performative

statement both citing the authority of Aztec culture and displacing it. Randall's body is both different from the Aztec and, due to Randall's Mexican heritage, the same.

More than the other texts, The Customized Body highlights the function of the photography in its performance of surrogacy. The photographer receives authorial credit and the photographs simply occupy more space in the text. The eleven-page photographic display following the two-page contextualizing essay regarding tattooing and scarification, for example, exhibits sixteen black and white photographic portraits of mostly nude male and female tattooed bodies in front of gray and black backgrounds. The modern primitive is located in the elusive space of nowhere. Displaced from even the indeterminate visual context of photographic juxtaposition, these bodies float in a void.

The photographs consequently dislocate the body from any historical transmission of an authentic original. Benjamin's critique of photographic representation explains that authenticity is "jeopardized when substantive duration ceases to matter" (221). When these photographs place the body in a black void lacking concrete signs to define the spatial or temporal context, therefore, they detach the body from the aura of tribal ancestry. Bakhtin describes this duration effect via the chronotope of the threshold. Bakhtin indicates that time has no duration within the time/space of the threshold ("Chronotope" 248). Within the threshold the body is in transition between polarities of decision, of place, of culture, of meaning. These are bodies that neither originate from the primitive nor transform into the modern.

Performing the In-Between

The vortex in which the bodies in all of these texts are represented, the space that configures their reality and produces their identity, is liminal space. Simultaneously this body is a visual intersection, interpretation, and adaptation of a conglomeration of "tribal" symbols which merge to form the imagination of "primitive" culture. The combination of the juxtaposition of "tribal" bodies and "tribal" illustrations with photographs of modern primitive bodies and body parts that exhibit designs that have no concrete referent, in addition to the narrative construction of "tribal" practices and societies as idyllic, produces a body which is everywhere and nowhere. This body is neither restricted by a classified space that constrains its behavior, nor does it have the comfort of a room of its own.

The performative production of modern primitivism that these three texts create rhetorically and visually through juxtaposition of non-Western and Western bodies consequently appears to answer Homi Bhabha's call to explore the in-between and unrepresentable Third Space "which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meanings and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity" (37). Bhabha indicates that such in-between spaces "provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of self-hood–singular or communal–that initiate new signs of identity, and innovate sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself" (1-2).

The modern primitive is this terrain, both because its identity is performatively authorized by an unfixed collaboration of "tribal" cultural and because it is enacted

through and upon the bodies of the modern primitives. The modern primitive tattooed body, as constituted by these texts, is more than a Western body overlaid with a "tribal" image. The modern primitive *becomes* through permanent physical transformation; it is literally reconfigured into a new form. Museum exhibitions may present a cultural object taken from one location and displace it into another, thus placing the object as a representation of the cultural "other." The modern primitive body, on the other hand, produces itself as a cultural other. It produces itself as the "in-between" space, thus eluding the politics of polarity and emerging as the other of itself (Bhabha 39). The modern primitive body, therefore, both functions to demonstrate how the process of exoticism takes place and to demonstrate the power of exotics to transcend the logic of cultural domination and appropriation.

Revising the Primitive

The story of the modern primitive constructed by these illustrated texts does not end with an imagined history, however. These texts both perform a surrogation of the imagined cultural performance of the "tribal" other and resurrect the performance of the tattooed exhibit early in the twentieth century. Sideshow history both authorizes the modern primitive's exotic performance as well as contests the performative authority of modern tribal imagination.

Modern Primitive Representations: Citing Sideshow Authority

Return of the Tribal refers to the practice of displaying illustrated people in its historical time-line of body modification and adornment practices (10). The Customized Body refers to this history in its mention of the association of tattooing with

"freakish" behavior (24). Modern Primitives, however, more clearly evokes the history of the sideshow with its representation of "Tattoo Mike" and "Captain Don." It is on those two figures, therefore, that I concentrate.

Tattoo Mike

"Tattoo" Mike Wilson, according to Vale and Juno's biographical sketch, began getting tattooed "at an early age" (Modern Primitives 37). According to the biographical sketch, Wilson was featured in Dick Zigun's Coney Island Side Shows by the Seashore as "The Illustrated Pain-proof Man" (Modern Primitives 37). Unlike many other interviews published in Vale an Juno's volume, the three-page section devoted to Tattoo Mike is devoid of any visual references to "tribal" art or practices. Instead, there is a photograph of Wilson at the Coney Island sideshow standing bare-chested on a stage and propping up his bed of nails so that what appears to be an audience member can walk up to touch it (Modern Primitives 39).

The other photos of Wilson show torso views of him in front of gray backgrounds and are, therefore, similar in form to the other portraits. However, the photograph on the first page of the section, like the photograph of the sideshow, violates the norm of the volume to represent the modern primitive bodies in space unmarked by time. The photograph decorating the first page of the section shows Tattoo Mike from the waist up, lying on his side, propped up on his left elbow in tall grass. He is wearing jeans and his right forearm is resting lightly on his waist. He is holding a lit cigarette in his right hand. Tattoo Mike's entire chest, hands, arms, and face are covered in tattoos. The shot is a medium close-up so that the grass forms the background for the

photograph and the horizon is only slightly visible above the grass and is out of focus. This field could be virtually anywhere. Temporal location is more distinct, however, marked by the jeans and the cigarette and suggestive of the mid to late twentieth century. The jeans and lit cigarette (as opposed to a nude body, a body in tribal garb, or a man dressed in a suit) materialize Wilson as both exotic due to the extensive facial tattoos, and as working class and masculine.

Wilson's original inspirations for his tattoo designs, far from being tribal, were located in the circus and art worlds:

> Seeing more and more circus photos inspired me. Also, when I was thirteen I was studying a lot of Surrealist art. I saw photos of a stage production of Jean Cocteau starring a heavily tattooed man and this became a *key*, signifying a possible way of going through the looking glass for me to achieve a whole other frame of reference, and to elicit experiences beyond the "normal"...presenting yourself as a signal beacon drawing things to happen to you. In other words: *tattoo as a passage to another life*. However, I've never had an absolute philosophical or religious program behind what I was attempting to do. But getting heavily tattooed definitely made interesting things happen to me! (Modern Primitives 38)

I think its important to mention here that the italics are the interviewers' addition to the text.[2] The highlighted text focuses on the modern primitive oriented discourse of tattooing as a metaphysical experience, even though I think Wilson was talking about something very different than a spiritual transformation. He indicates later in the interview, for example, that being tattooed made him a marked man in the sense of social display:

> I was definitely a marked man, and most of the time I liked it, but it does get in the way, such as when I'm looking for work. I like the tattoos themselves–I thought about them carefully and chose the tattoos I wanted. I like meeting people with tattoos–it's a weird bridge to meeting people; sometimes I'll meet

> people in kind of an odd way. But what I don't like is the *obvious*. I'm in theater 24 hours a day when I'm in public. (Modern Primitives 39)

When Wilson suggests that tattooing is transformative, it appears to me that he is referring to a visual physical transformation and not a spiritual awakening. Once again, however, the editors italicize the word that might cut against this non-tribal message. That is, they highlight that Wilson does not appreciate that his body is on display before an audience, an audience they characterize in the editors' introduction to the volume as a media programmed, de-individualized society whose minds have been colonized by TV images (Modern Primitives 5). Vale and Juno thus elevate modern primitive identity above the rest of society and separate its practices from conformist, disembodied, and simulated culture.

Vale and Juno's focus throughout the publication is on the practices of body modification as "uniquely personal experiences" which "underscore the realization that death itself, the Grim Reaper, must be stared straight in the face, unflinchingly, as part of the continuous struggle to free ourselves from our complexes, to work out unaccountable aggression and satisfy devious urges" (Modern Primitives 5). Wilson's very practical outlook on tattooing challenges this ethic of the modern primitive. His perspective is perhaps most aptly illustrated in his answer to the question "What does tattooing mean to you now?" His response? "To be honest, I don't even think about it any longer" (Modern Primitives 39).

Despite the distinctly non-modern primitivist attitudes that Wilson articulates, the editors include him in their volume. The rationale for this decision is perhaps

located not in Wilson's behavior but in his body as a representative of tribal art. Wilson's tattoos are not only inspired by the circus, it seems, but are also derived from Samoan and Indian designs (Modern Primitives 39). He characterizes his body art as a "kind of *psychedelia* of different cultures combined" and says that in the planning stages of a tattoo he gets "deeply involved with the spiritual and metaphorical implications of the prospective design, but after it's on I forget about it" (Modern Primitives 39).[3] Wilson's body is a temple of primitive images, and he has just enough intellectual involvement with the designs, if not a spiritual involvement with the practice, to warrant a presence in the text.

Captain Don

Tattoo Mike is not alone in his citation of the circus sideshow history of tattooing, Captain Don Leslie is swallowing swords right alongside him. Captain Don is heralded in the text as "a survivor of the forgotten era of the traveling circus sideshow" (Modern Primitives 68). Captain Don's photographs show him to be heavily tattooed on his chest, back, and arms (Modern Primitives 68-75). His introductory photograph depicts him bare-chested in the act of sword swallowing. The pictures spread throughout his section of the text show him on stage with the Cristiana Brothers' Circus, posed with his back to the camera while holding a sword so its handle is visible over his shoulder, and playing a guitar behind a three-sided circus display board announcing "Capt. Don Presents Songs & Swords. Unique Music. Circus Acts. Strange, Odd & Unusual Feats." Other pictures include a photograph of Captain Don's

sword swallowing mentors, Carlos Leal and Estelline Pike, "the last lady sword-swallower, now retired in Florida" (Modern Primitives 70, 71).

The interview with Captain Don is dedicated primarily to his circus acts and to a type of circus and carnival history lesson.[4] Captain Don is presented as an icon of days gone by who knows what it was like back when tattooed people were exhibited regularly on the sideshow circuit. The introduction to his interview, for example, indicates that he is "a survivor of the forgotten era of the traveling circus sideshow" (Modern Primitives 68). Vale and Juno go on to ask a series of questions that both establish Captain Don's authority as a sideshow performer as well as suggest that he represents a dying or dead tradition. For instance, Vale asks Captain Don how long he has been a sword swallower, requests that Captain Don describe his act, wonders how long it took to train for the profession, and murmurs a ponderous, "Hmm," when Captain Don reveals that none of his children is carrying on his tradition. Captain Don's answers to these questions form a narrative describing life as a sideshow performer, the culture of the circus and carnival, and the experience of sword-swallowing and fire-eating.

Throughout the interview, Captain Don makes no pretense of adhering to a modern primitivist philosophy. Like Tattoo Mike, he is very clear about his non-spiritual association with tattooing. He indicates that his motivation for getting tattooed was material: as a sword-swallower, human pincushion, and fire-eater, he could simply make more money with the addition of tattoos (Modern Primitives 73). Captain Don's story is that of the decline of the power of the illustrated person to command an

audience.[5] When tattooed people became commonplace, they had to learn to perform other acts on the sideshow platform. Captain Don merely recognized that being tattooed was an asset to his current act and so he "got tattooed to be on exhibition" (Modern Primitives 73). Moreover, many of Captain Don's designs are decidedly not tribal. His back piece, for example, is a Christian image: a large cross scrawled with "Rock of Ages." Nor does he position himself as an executor of primitive practices. He insists that he is not a tattoo artist but a tattoo-ist or, in other words, "an applicator" of tattoos (Modern Primitives 74). When asked when he met Ed Hardy, a tattoo artist and author who edited the "New Tribalism" edition of Tattootime and is also a subject of the volume, Captain Don honestly replies that he "never even heard of him 'til '81; I wasn't around the tattooing scene *per se*; I was around the circus sideshow" (Modern Primitives 74).

The one tilt of the hat that Captain Don pays to the spirituality of tattooing is very late in the interview when he is responding to the inquiry about the meaning of early sailor tattoos. In his answer, he refers to the human "primitive instinct" to decorate "him or herself" and to body practices in Africa and China. He also suggests that a tattoo can be a message from the soul (Modern Primitives 75). On the other hand, in the same answer Captain Don also declares that most body decoration is motivated by self-expression: "I want you to know who I am" (Modern Primitives 75). He furthermore insinuates that this desire is founded in social disaffiliation: "especially we who like to separate ourselves from the populace and be in special groups. . ." (Modern Primitives 75). These statements are much more indicative of a mid-century mentality

of subcultural group affiliation than they are of the modern primitive philosophy. The ellipsis, like the italics in Wilson's interview, seems to be an editorial choice. Perhaps Captain Don was coming too close to suggesting that group affiliation, as opposed to the individual identity marketed in the introduction, motivates people to become tattooed.

Part of Modern Primitive's anomalous performance of modern primitivism includes the performances of tattooed bodies which are a direct link to the sideshow past. Once that past is heralded, the implications of performances of tattooed freaks and their conventions of display are cited as an authorizing discourse for the cultural performance of the modern primitive. In other words, the acting bodies of Tattoo Mike and Captain Don reenact cultural performances of the tattooed body of the past and displace them not only in the context of modern manifestations of the sideshow, but also within the discourse and performance of modern primitivism.

Exotic Presentation and the Illustrated Person

Illustrated people on sideshow stages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century performed a version of primitivism that the modern primitives seek to displace. Tattooed exhibits were presented as exotics designed to appeal to "people's interest in the culturally strange, the primitive, the bestial, the exotic" (Bogdan 105). Tattooed bodies were particularly compelling in this mode because "early anthropologists saw the practice of tattooing as the ultimate sign of primitiveness, revealing a lack of sensitivity to pain and unabashed paganism" (Bogdan 241). Unlike other exotics on the freak stage which were often ethnic minorities performing "wild men" and "savages," however, the

tattooed exotic was usually a white man or woman who was represented as a victim of torture at the hands of "primitive" culture. The narratives surrounding the performances of these tattooed exhibits consequently fabricated tales of kidnapping and rescue after enduring and surviving the intense pain of tattooing.

Adventure narratives of torture are thought to originate with the introduction of John Rutherford to English popular culture in 1828:

> Rutherford declared that he had been captured by the Maoris who held him prisoner for six years; he had been compelled to marry the chief's thirteen year old daughter, he had three children, and was forcibly tattooed. His story aroused sympathy and publicity, on which he capitalized by becoming a successful exhibit. (Bogdan 242)

Rutherford's story was eventually revealed to be a fabrication. Rutherford was actually a mariner who had jumped ship and chosen to marry a native woman and become tattooed (Burchett 24).[6] Those who followed him onto the stage, however, capitalized on the success of his narrative at accessing the popular cultural curiosity about primitive people. Subsequent illustrated men in the United States told stories that were remarkably similar to Rutherford's. Captain Costentenus (a.k.a. Constantine), for example, borrowed the major motifs of Rutherford's chronicles. The following account of Costentenus' trials is courtesy of his fellow circus mate, Robert Sherwood:

> Costentenus was a native of Albania, in Turkey, although his parents were Greeks of Christian faith. On one of the wild raids of Ali Tebelen, the bloody Pasha of Yanina, who attempted to press the young Greeks into his army, young Costentenus was captured. . .Costentenus fell a victim of the tattooing-needle through his Christian faith. Surely the Christian martyrs in the Roman arenas suffered no more than he. The pain must have been terrible, although not affecting the brain. He told me that as the lines of blood-drops extended farther and farther over the white sensitive skin, and all the nerves began to twitch, the sweat stood out on his brow and he groaned aloud with pain. . .After his grueling

> experience, his body, terribly swollen and inflamed, was wrapped in bandages, previously soaked in linseed oil. . .He was discovered, rescued and brought to America by P.T. Barnum, who learned of him through a Spanish sailor while traveling in the Mediterranean on Tom Thumb's first European tour. He was first placed on exhibition in this country at George Bunnell's Museum. (148-150).

Costentenus' story is remarkably similar in theme to Rutherford's (S. Gilbert 137). Costentenus' story was, of course, also a fabrication. It turns out that he had himself tattooed with the intention of going into show business (S. Gilbert 137). Illustrated women also jumped onto the primitive bandwagon when they stepped onto the sideshow platform in the late 1800s. Nora Hildebrandt, for example, claimed that her father tattooed her under threat of death from Sitting Bull (Mifflin 10).

These stories were, for the most part, fictional and acted to create the imagination of primitive culture as savage and uncivilized. For the popular audience, these performances and narratives established primitive practices firmly in the category of the cultural and social other. The effort of the modern primitive narrative constructed in contemporary illustrated texts, of course, rehearses the themes circulating in the early century by hailing primitive and tribal culture and adornment practices as inherently human and spiritual. Modern primitives celebrate tattooing for the same reasons that it was abhorred early in the century. Cesare Lombroso argued in 1896, for example, that "tattooing is, in fact, one of the essential characteristics of primitive man, and of men who still live in the savage state" (800). Lombroso, consequently, represented tattooing as an "atavistic revision, evidence of an individual's regression to a more aggressive, antisocial form of being" (Bogdan 249). Modern primitives, on the

other hand, agree that tattooing is an essential characteristic of primitive culture but argue that the regression to primitivism is a positive method of reconnecting to the body through what is, according to their rhetoric, the most human of behaviors. The historicizing narrative surrounding both sets of performances is remarkably similar. It is not unusual, therefore, that the physical representations of the modern primitive would also cite the authority of the early freak displays.

According to Bogdan, some of the major conventions of exotic display included costuming and photographic representation designed to magnify and exaggerate cultural difference as erotic, exotic and strange (105-107). The costuming, for example, would be sparse and "compatible with the story" (Bogdan 105). Tattooed bodies were unique in some aspects because of the need to reveal the body in order to reveal the tattoos. The costume for illustrated people was, for the most part, their tattoos. Illustrated women broke feminine conventions of physical exhibition by showing body parts strictly coded as private. Tattooed women exposed their entire legs and even appeared in public in costumes permitting observers to "look upon the quaintly decorated skin of the upper portions of the chest and back, the arms and the exposed portions of the lower limbs" (New York Times qtd. in Mifflin 10). The female tattooed body was erotic as well as exotic, and physical exposure was critical to that performance.

The male tattooed body also performed the strip-tease aspect of exotic/erotic performance. Sherwood's description of Costentenus, for example, suggests that the illustrated man had to undress in front of the audience in order to reveal the tattoos (151). The male body's exoticism was contextualized a bit differently, however.

Because the norms for physical display were different for men and women, male tattooed exotics were eroticized by a connection to sexual ability. The narratives, for example, reinforced the dominion of man over woman by asserting that the tortured men were given women of the "tribe" as their wives. Costentenus, moreover, was described by the sideshow talker as a "wild tattooed man" who "is much adored by all ladies" (Bogdan 249). In addition to the obvious gender implications attesting to masculine sexual prowess and feminine submission, this characterization constituted the primitive tattooed man as an erotic as well as exotic figure.

The pictorial displays in the modern texts' performance of modern primitivism clearly reflect this erotic/exotic connection via physical exposure. The bodies in The Customized Body, for example, are nude for the most part. A photograph in the tattooing and scarification section explicitly shows a man holding his tattooed and pierced penis in his hand (The Customized Body 30). The women photographed, on the other hand, tend to be pictured in poses that both reveal and conceal their exotic bodies. The only full frontal nude shot of a woman in this section, for example, has her covering her genitals with her hands (The Customized Body 36). The other photographs of the women show them in various levels of profile poses that obscure while partially revealing their bodies. The female modern primitive body is clearly still constrained by the tension between exposure and concealment that influenced the tattooed women at the turn of the century, while the male primitive continues to be associated with active realization of exotic/erotic potential.

Photographic representations of illustrated men additionally authorize the discourse and performance of the contemporary modern primitive. Bogdan indicates that photographic representation displayed the freak body "in front of a backdrop depicting jungle scenes or exotic lands" (Bogdan 106). For example, a Harper's Weekly advertisement shows Captain Costentenus tied to stakes in the ground while a "native" woman tattoos him before male onlookers (Bogdan 247). The images of Fakir Musafar physically remember this image. In the opening photograph in Modern Primitives, Musafar is hanging by hooks inserted through the skin of his chest. His head is thrown back, he has a stick or bone shard inserted through his nasal septum, his upper arms are wrapped in bands and he is holding his right wrist with his left hand at his waist. The head of his penis is tied tightly with a piece of string and his hips and pelvis are decorated with a solid black abstract tattoo design following the contour of his body and appearing to extend around to his lower back. The picture does not disclose from what he is hanging so it is as if he is suspended in mid-air. The setting for the photo is a scene of the open plains. Musafar's body, like Costentenus', is represented in an uncivilized or naturally primitive setting.

The physically torturous element of primitive practice enacted upon a non-tribal body is, however, displaced by the rhetoric of choice. Modern primitives enact the physical rituals of pain and body modification, but such behaviors are chosen, not imposed upon them. The rearticulation of the "primitive" practices in the context of the late twentieth-century consequently reflects the cultural context of the contemporary era as much as the illustrated men and women's stories participated in their cultural context.

The New Age Spirituality popularized since the 1960s encouraged an ethic of consciousness transformation through the adaptation of non-western religions and practices (DeMello, Bodies of Inscription 145). New Age philosophy, therefore, provides part of the cultural context authorizing the rearticulation of primitive practices previously viewed as savage and bestial. Within the New Age and modern primitivist framework, pain is transcendent: "Today, something as basic as sex itself is inextricably intertwined with a flood of alien images and cues implanted from media programming and advertising. But one thing remains fairly certain: pain is a uniquely personal experience; it remains loaded with tangible shock value" (Vale and Juno 5). For the modern primitive the pain and torture purportedly experienced by the illustrated men and women become voluntary acts of spirituality. Modern primitivist bodies like Musafar's are consequently constituted through a rehearsal of past performances displaced within this new context. Without Lombroso's rhetoric and Captain Costentenus' performance, Musafar's body and New Ageism would lack performative force.

The performance of the body of illustrated men and women in the late 1800s and early 1900s both referred to and created an imagined version of primitive life that was tied to painful practices of body modification that were interpreted as savage and bestial. The mode of presentation of these bodies displayed them as exotic and erotic because of the narrative representation of their experiences as well as their costumes and photographic and illustrated representations. These performances were produced within a cultural context that encouraged negative evaluation of primitive and tribal

cultures. The performance of the modern primitive body constituted through the texts Modern Primitives, The Customized Body and Return of the Tribal occurs within a new context, where the exotic tattooed body gains new meaning. In the late twentieth-century, the illustrated body reappeared within the cultural context of New Age rhetoric. The early century's negative interpretation is, therefore, both cited and, through displacement in the context of New Age rhetoric, revised. The modern primitive body additionally refers to the performances of the illustrated men and women through their physical representations in these contemporary texts. The modern primitive is constituted as exotic partially because it physically refers to the exotic presentations of the past through costume and photographic representation, and partially because it performs a new imagination of tribal culture.

Disidentification of the Working-Class Body

Throughout the process of recontextualizing, the performance of modern primitivism also attempts to erase the history of the working-class tattooed body. For the most part, the narratives participating in the performance of the modern primitive or neo-tribal body ignore much of the mid-century history and interpretation of the practice and image of tattooing and tattoos. Return of the Tribal ignores this history, The Customized Body pays it cursory attention, and Modern Primitives attempts to recode it.

In the historical time line of body modification practices presented in Return of the Tribal, the working-class history of tattooing is erased. The time line begins "circa 60,000 B.C.E." with practices of the Australian Aborigines and concludes with the

1980s and 1990s promotion of research "on tribal people, their arts, and lifestyles" (Camphausen 5-13). The history jumps from 1891 to WWII, completely obscuring the decline of sideshow exhibition of illustrated people and the growth of working-class associations and interpretations of tattoos.[7] The 1950s, the decade where the image of the tattooed working-class male circulated in the Marlboro Man campaign and tattooing was evaluated as a practice primarily associated with lower class bodies, is described in the following way: "Subcultures such as the early rockers and teddy boys helped bring the tattoo to a new popularity. Also, the mohawk hairstyle, based on the practice of a Native American Tribe, appeared among members of New York City street gangs" (Camphausen 11). The performance of seamen, soldiers, juvenile delinquents, as well as the homosexuality and culturally coded lower-class deviance which Steward and Sanders report in their ethnographic studies, has no place in Camphausen's narrative. Instead, Camphausen features punk subculture, Fakir Musafar, the publication of Modern Primitives, and the Lollopalooza musical tour begun in the 1990s by musician Perry Farrell because it enhanced the tribal renaissance through its "tribal-like gathering combining entertainment with political and human rights concerns" (11).

The Customized Body does acknowledge tattooing's working-class history:

> The ever-growing ranks of the Western middle-classes, however, continued to show disdain for tattooing--vehemently labeling it as 'barbaric' and, worst of all, 'common'. Ghettoized and stigmatized in this way, tattooing in the West became associated with the disreputable, the criminal and the freakish. Certainly in such conditions the odds were stacked against it developing as an art form. Yet despite this the 1960s saw the beginnings of a 'Tattoo Renaissance' which (reflecting a new awareness of and respect for non-Western cultures in general) has forced a new appreciation in the West of the aesthetic possibilities of this form of body decoration. (Polhemus 24)

This account of tattooing's history summarizes thirty years of tattooing in a paragraph, implying that this representation of the tattooed body was something to overcome. Polhemus also disregards the aesthetics of tattooing in the working-class American tradition: "Western tattooing had degenerated into a kind of haphazard graffiti with hackneyed hearts, sailing ships and bluebirds placed willy-nilly all over the body" (24). His rhetoric suggests this history disappears with the advent of the tattoo renaissance. Considering that the modern primitivist position also vaunts the permanence of tattooing, this disappearance is unlikely. The modern primitive performance cannot erase the physical reality of the American tradition of tattooing. The tattooed body permanently and visibly retains the memory of its various pasts despite recontexualizing efforts.

Modern Primitives does not deny the history of mid-century American tattooing, nor does it argue for its aesthetic emptiness. This text attempts to recontexualize these bodies as modern primitive bodies. In their interview of Captain Don, for example, Vale and Juno attempt to elicit an explanation of sailor tattooing that is consistent with spiritual transformation and silence the discourse of group affiliation. Moreover, Ed Hardy, who is also heralded as an important force for transforming tattooing in The Customized Body, is presented as a critic of popular culture and a master of Japanese tattooing even though he aligns himself with the old school tradition (Modern Primitives 60). Hardy's body is also a testament to the American history of tattooing. He indicates, for example, that the tattoos on his body do not reflect what "really *can* be done" (Hardy in Modern Primitives 61). Interestingly, Hardy's tattooed body is not

pictured in Modern Primitives. In the effort to recode working-class tattooing as an artistic transformative process of self-expression that should be meaningful, as opposed to a group affiliative process occurring on a whim, the authors choose not to show a body that might performatively challenge their rhetorical efforts.

The efforts of these texts to create modern primitivism partially through the erasure of the popular cultural past of tattooing in the United States cannot deny the material reality of that history written upon bodies. By identifying itself in opposition to the working-class tattooed body, the modern primitive places the working-class body in the position to destabilize modern primitive discourse. These bodies are the constitutive outside to the modern primitive; they make the modern primitive possible as well as pose a constant challenge to the validity of the modern primitive. Butler suggests that this process of disidentification occurs when discourse attempts to create identity categories and "facilitates a reconceptualization" of which bodies within a particular discourse matter (Bodies that Matter 4). In other words, the working-class body wearing an assemblage of old-school tattoos or the tattooed person who does not identify with modern primitive discourse is provided with a platform to talk back to the modern primitive. This platform of resistance has been utilized by the body excluded by modern primitive discourse, according to DeMello's analysis of tattoo community, within the context of contemporary tattoo magazines.

In the section of her study "Tattoo Magazines II: Bikers Write Back," DeMello suggests that certain "low brow" (DeMello's term) tattoo magazines have become a site for members of the tattoo community excluded by modern primitivist-like rhetoric and

performance to express their disaffiliation. DeMello includes excerpts from reader's letters published in magazines like Tattoo, which began as a biker magazine (DeMello, Bodies of Inscription 114). In one particular series, letter writers respond to a previously published letter whose author suggested that biker-style tattoos were ugly and project a negative image. The biker respondents were thus given a discursive space to articulate their disidentified identity. The respondents identify themselves as Harley riders who find their tattoos meaningful to them and also express an appreciation for prison tattoos (DeMello, Bodies of Inscription 115). In one particularly colorful response to the critique, a writer says: "So you think they are ugly and project an image that turns off many people. All I can say is, 'Fuck you and your long fingernails'" (DeMello, Bodies of Inscription 115).

Another series of letters printed in Tattoo Revue from May to July 1993 respond to a March letter expressing a concern with the "yuppification" of tattooing:

> I believe a true artist would respect anyone's desire to become tattooed, no matter how small, silly or whatever the desired piece may be. Realize that tattooing is an art form, not a "way to be cool"...I'd almost like to see these images from whose meanings "came right from the soul" all six of them.
>
> (Guy, "News and Reviews," July 1993)

> I was wondering how much it cost to become a member of your club? A whole pound of flesh or would a specific number of inches do? I was hoping I could obtain a copy of the guidelines regarding who I should and who I shouldn't tattoo. I know this would really help me in singling out the "Wannabes" and "Losers" like people who count their tattoos or the clowns just cruising for a fashion statement. I think you hung those boots on the end of your nose and they are blocking your view.
>
> (Mike, "News and Reviews," August 1993)
>
> (qtd. in DeMello, Bodies of Inscription 119)

These responses indicate that tattoo enthusiasts who do not adhere to the modern primitive philosophy tend to view those who do as elitist and exclusionary. They mock the distinction made between tattoos that are old-school or trivial and those that represent neo-tribal belonging and thus they highlight the artificiality of the difference. Moreover, these responses suggest a class divide when "Mike" asks how much the price of entry into this exclusive club would cost.

Modern primitivism, from the perspective of those its rhetoric excludes, is a transparent effort on the part of the middle-class to be "cool" and "fashionable." It is taken as an appropriation not of "primitive" art and culture but of the American tradition of tattooing. In essence, it is perceived as a middle-class attempt to go slumming for coolness. Modern primitive rhetoric is a slap in the face of traditional American tattooing, therefore, at two levels. Initially, it erases working-class identity. Secondly, when it does not erase identity, it implies that the working class has somehow gotten tattooing wrong and it needs to be saved by those who really appreciate its significance.

The performance of modern primitivism clearly invites a response from those it excludes, opening up a space for that body to challenge the modern primitive's identity construction. These responses challenge the veracity of modern primitive representational strategies for those who do not identify with neo-tribal discourse. In the process, the vision of tattooing as spirituality is reconfigured into yet another fashion statement, as the reference to hanging the boots on the end of the nose implies. Moreover, the exclusionary effect of modern primitive discourse is revealed. The elitist

aesthetic privileging a specific design style is revealed to be yet another classification strategy denying the legitimacy of a specific social group.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that the texts Modern Primitives, Return of the Tribal, and The Customized Body performatively construct through the process of exoticism the performance of modern primitivism. Modern primitivism thus contrived dissolves polar distinctions between self and other and, in so doing, performs the unrepresentable in-between. Representing the unrepresentable is possible because the modern primitive constructed both visually and through written discourse consciously and unconsciously cites and revises both imagined and concrete cultural performances. Modern primitives are produced in the interaction between self and other, exist as/in liminality, represent both the disappearance of the tribal as well the disappearance of themselves, surrogate exotic presentation of illustrated men and women, and construct a category of disidentification. This body is subjectively, textually, contextually, and intertextually fashioned via the culmination of a variety of authorizing historical and social discourses.

In one sense, therefore, modern primitive identity may be understood as another example of modernist primitivism. Modernist primitivism refers to the artistic practice of appropriating artifacts and artistic practices from primitive cultures and putting them on display in modern museums as exemplars of "tribal" or "primitive" culture. It is this practice of appropriating the other and fetishizing difference to which Said objects. Said and others argue that this practice represents merely another instance of western

imperialism. The "primitive" is either a source of spiritual awareness or a spectacle of savagery and in both cases the source cultures no longer have a claim to themselves because they have been swallowed up by the West and spit out as simulation. This trend also extended into theatre as tribal rituals and performance practices became the inspiration for many avant-garde modes of performance. Christopher Innes' exploration of avant-garde theatre from 1892-1992, for example, exposes the appropriation of ritual practices as "deeply questionable" and occasionally demonstrating a "tendency towards arcane or facile exoticism" (18, 192).

Thus conceived, exoticism is not the productive concept that I described at the beginning of this chapter, but a reduction of difference. The process of constructing modern primitive identity from a combination of multiple cultural signs, in other words, illustrates the recuperative effects of postmodern pastiche. Jameson defines pastiche as the "random cannibalization of all the styles of the past, the play of random stylistic allusion, and in general what Henri Lefebvre has called the increasing primacy of the 'neo'" (65-6). The world of the "neo" is, according to Jameson, transformed "into sheer images of itself" and replete with "pseudo-events" (66). Jameson argues that pastiche, consequently, while sharing some of the formal characteristics of parody, has lost parody's "vocation":

> Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a particular mask, speech in a dead language: but it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without any of parody's ulterior motives, amputated of the satiric impulse, devoid of laughter and of any conviction that alongside the abnormal tongue you have momentarily borrowed, some healthy linguistic normality still exists. (65)

For Jameson, pastiche is impotent because imitation, rather than critique, is the end result.

Neo-tribalism clearly falls within this definition. It is the product of the combination of multiple styles of body modification cobbled together from multiple cultures in order to create a new identity. This new identity is, at one level, a sheer image because it is not historically tied to any real cultural source. The event of this body, then, is seemingly "pseudo" because it imitates or attempts to replicate a cultural performance that never really existed. The key to this process is the creation of an imagination of a cultural authority or, in Jameson's terms, "an imaginary museum of a now global culture" (65). From this point of view, neo-tribal or modern primitive practices become yet another example of colonizing the other via the nostalgic image culture of the post-modern. The primitive is "thus constructive, not disruptive, of the binary ratio of the west; fixed as a structural opposite or a dialectical other to be incorporated, it assists in the establishment of a western identity, center, norm and name" (Foster 196). In this sense, modern primitives are aligned with the artistic tradition of modernist primitivism.

Objections to modernist primitivism, however, represent a narrow definition of exoticism and one this study has rejected as a means to evaluate the specific representation of modern primitivism within the texts under consideration. Santaolalla, for example, objects to such broad negative statements about exoticism (12). She argues that generalizations made about "appropriating subjects" and "appropriated objects" may be useful as strategic standpoints, but "run the risk of neglecting historical

and socio-cultural specificities. For more substantial insights, both the types of images that are appropriated and the contexts in which these appropriations take place need to be examined in greater detail" (12). Likewise, Hoesterey calls for criticism challenging the notion that pastiche is a negligible form of representation (ix).

Arguments designed to defend postmodern pastiche as a representational form that does not flatten difference through appropriation consequently attend to context via their focus on the motive of the artist/author. Hoesterey contends, for example, that "the authors and artists of our critical pastiche are sorters; the flattening of all differentiations – historical, ethnic, artistic – in a totally interconnected global culture is likely to be anathema to them" (118). Hutcheon, moreover, acknowledges Jameson's critique, but insists upon a distinction between "a nostalgic, neoconservative recovery of past meaning" and what she calls "postmodernist parody" (98). The latter category, Hutcheon proposes, "is fundamentally ironic and critical, not nostalgic or antiquarian in its relation to the past" (98). Her position assumes that the aim or desire of the postmodern parodic representation is to retain "the doubleness of the politics of authorized transgression" without a "recuperative evasion of contradiction" (107). The assumption behind this position is that the representation is consciously constructed with parody or irony in mind and that art succeeds or fails depending on whether or not the contradictions posed can be easily resolved into a single decoding (Hutcheon 117).

My analysis of the tattooed body produced in the process of exoticism offers another option. This analysis suggests that the tattooed body as a sign of modern primitive identity, due to its specific form and context, is not a symbol of simple

cultural appropriation. Instead, the tattooed modern primitive expresses the performative process of exoticism partly by representing the productive 'third space'. Moreover, I contend that representations can be resistant despite nostalgic intent. This possibility is most obviously illustrated in Modern Primitives. Vale and Juno's apparent desire in this text is to propose modern primitivism as an answer to a postmodern identity crisis. They define tattoos and tattooing as a means to achieve some sort of essential primal and spiritual identity. The rhetorical strategy of the authors is, therefore, a nostalgic attempt to appropriate "native" cultural practices by offering up tattooing as a technique that western culture can use to save itself. Despite this rhetorical goal, however, some of the tattooed bodies represented in and on the pages of this volume resist their context because the meanings they signify are not discursively compatible with Vale and Juno's rhetoric of modern primitivism. The bodies of Tattoo Mike and Captain Don, for example, refuse to be normalized within this discourse.

This resistance is produced because Vale and Juno attempt to both classify the tattoo and the process of tattooing. In other words, when modern primitive discourse attempts to normalize the tattooed body by pursuing an interpretation of both tattooing as practice and tattoo as text (rather than either one or the other) the incompatibility of one explanation with the other exposes the ineffectiveness of both of these discourses to contain the meaning of the tattooed body. Had Vale and Juno, for example, been satisfied with calling tattoos signs of modern primitive identity, the bodies of Tattoo Mike and Captain Don would have been classified and objectified in a manner similar

to the tattoo competition entrants. The discourse of Tattoo Mike and Captain Don would have been irrelevant to Vale and Juno's claim, and their bodies would have been normalized as objects. Because the authors pursued the larger goal of defining the practice of tattooing as a symptom of modern primitive identity, however, Tattoo Mike and Captain Don were given a platform to voice an experience incompatible with the authors' intent. As a result, Tattoo Mike and Captain Don, like the body of the unruly tattoo contest entrant, were provided with agency. The tensions that Hutcheon argues are requisite for successful pastiche exist despite (as opposed to because of) the author's intent.

Modern Primitives is not, therefore, a neutral text. The exotic production of the modern primitive tattooed body both fails to achieve the authors' goal of recoding tattooing and, because of that failure, reveals the resistant potential of pastiche as a representational strategy. Incompatibilities erupt on the pages that beg the question of what is being "cannibalized": is it "native" culture, working-class masculinity, freak shows, or the modern primitive's body? Pastiche as a representational strategy, consequently, is not only productive when the author intends it to be or if the form demonstrates a deliberate effort to produce tension. Pastiche is also resistant when that which is represented resists it discursive context.

Notes

1. Another performative flip this rhetoric accomplishes is displacing the power relations implicit in regarding tattooing as an expression of interior subjectivities as discussed in Chapter Two. Scientific discourses during the late nineteenth century used the rhetoric of tattoos expressing personality as a means to classify the tattooed figure as a deviant or criminal. Modern primitive discourse inverts the power relations by

suggesting that far from being signs of criminality and deviance, tattoos are natural expressions of humanity as well as being the product of social relations or aesthetic seeing.

2. As a matter of form, Vale and Juno's questions are in italics, which forges a link between italicized text in the interviews and the interviewer's voice.

3. The term "psychedelia" also alludes, of course, to the practice of using drugs to transport the mind, to have a disembodied experience. It is interesting that drugs are also a focus in Return of the Tribal. The mind/body dichotomy disintegrates yet again because the practice of painful body alteration is compared to the effects of psychedelic drugs; spiritual/mental transformation occurs through embodied practices.

4. Captain Don also indicates that Fakir Musafar used to be a carnival showman before "moving on to other things" (Modern Primitives 73).

5. Bogdan explains that tattoo exhibitions waned in the 1930's and "some tattooed men resorted to bizarre performances to make themselves more marketable on the highly competitive freak market" (256).

6. Rutherford's experience also set the precedent for seamen who, upon returning from the sea and/or military service, found a career in exhibiting their tattooed bodies (Bogdan 241). The connection between American naval servicemen and tattoos can also be traced to this tradition.

7. The WWII reference is to Nazi use of tattoos to mark concentration camp victims.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

I began this study with the intent to determine whether or not there was something unique about the tattooed body in representation that would offer insight into the potential of the body in representation to resist reproduction within dominant discursive regimes. I also asked whether or not representations of the tattooed body provide any understanding into the resistant potential of performative cultural authorization. I wish to conclude this analysis, therefore, by revisiting the theoretical issues introduced in Chapter One reconceived through both the specific analyses of this study and through the logic and language of the tattoo community. The first two sections of the chapter, therefore, juxtapose performativity with the tattoo community concepts of "coverup" and "rework". The last two sections follow a similar pattern and begin with issues of body classification before turning to the distinction between "old school" and "new school" tattooing aesthetics. Throughout the entire discussion, I pose concerns and questions that may offer potential for further investigation.

Performativity Revisited

This study suggests how cultural authorization produces performatives that are successful either in their reproduction of cultural authority or successful because they empower the utterance to question authorizing discourse. A performative therefore is successful in two very distinct ways. In the first case, the representation cites an authority in order to reproduce the discursive logic of that authority. The Tampax advertisement, for example, reproduces the logic of gender divisions and successfully

maintains the power relations constructed by that authorizing discourse. This form of success is consistent with Austin's original theory that the performative creates itself by citing and reproducing a discourse that provides it with authority.

On the other hand, performatives have the potential to resist dominant discursive regimes and that power too lies in their citation of authority. The tattoo convention is illustrative in this regard. The space of the tattoo convention cited the authority of the carnival and sideshow. The nature of this authority, however, was itself a resistance to dominant discursive regimes. The carnival and sideshow represented threshold spaces of transformation and disorder. The power of this authority was, therefore, transgressive. The tattoo convention successfully cited this counter-normative authorizing discourse and so it, too, became transgressive. The implication for performativity theory is that successful performatives do not always reinforce power in their citation of authority if their authority is garnered from a counter-hegemonic discursive source.

Perhaps the most significant revelation of this study in terms of performativity is that performatives may not always need to be authorized by a prior discursive history, but can create their own authority in the process of creating themselves. The identity of the modern primitive as produced by Modern Primitives, The Customized Body, and Return of the Tribal created the imagination of a "tribal" culture from which it gained its authority. The modern primitive performance was felicitous not because it cited or reiterated a prior authority, but because it cited an authority created in the process of citation. Baudrillard argues in "Simulacra and Simulations" that this process of cultural

production, the imagined construction of a "real" that is only produced in simulation, reproduces power:

> In this passage to a space whose curvature is no longer that of the real, not of truth, the age of simulation thus begins with a liquidation of all referentials – worse: by their artificial resurrection in systems of signs, which are more ductile material than meaning, in that they lend themselves to all systems of equivalence, all binary oppositions and all combinatory algebra. (167).

Baudrillard's rather pessimistic view is that simulation reproduces power because it is easily reduced to either/or categories. This position is similar to that which argues that performatives are successful because they reproduce norms as either/or categories. What this study has suggested, however, is that there is potential for resistance in pastiche. The creation of modern primitive identity from the simulation of "tribal" culture frees the tattooed body from citing only its working-class, masculine, and deviant history because it creates a new, hybrid identity. The image of this identity therefore has the potential to illuminate the process of its own construction.[1] The history of deviance is not erased, in other words, but confronted by a new authority/discourse. The result produces the modern primitive as a cultural hybrid as well as provides the working-class with a voice. Prior to the creation of the simulated modern primitive identity, the working-class vision of tattoos could only respond to the dominant discourse, thus reproducing the logic of its outsider status. With the entrance of modern primitive identity into the equation, however, the bikers, sailors, gang-members, and prisoners were no longer the sole other. The fracturing of the category of other produced by this new identity, therefore, destabilizes the binary rather than reproduces its logic.

Tattoo Theory and Surrogation

The language of the tattoo community offers, perhaps, the best explanation for the destabilization of binary categories in representation through hybridization. I turn, therefore, to the tattoo convention to reconceive surrogation through this renewed sense of performativity. As I paged through the photo albums of tattoos and tattooed body parts that each artist had on display at Tattoo Voodoo, two of the consistent themes were "rework" and "coverup." Tattoo rework consists of adding to or altering tattoos already present on the body of the consumer. Sometimes this work refreshes tattoos that have faded over time. In other cases, according to the wife of an artist from Indiana, the clients come in because they want to have the tattoo "finished." The original artist had either not added the final color or detail or had considered the product complete when the consumer had not. Coverups, conversely, replace the original image with a completely new image which, depending upon the expertise of the artist, obscures the original image. Names of ex-girlfriends and boyfriends are elided by renderings of animals, flowers, dragons etc. "Scratcher" tattoos are replaced by typically larger and more detailed images.[2] Both forms of tattoo re-imaging were marked in the photo albums with "before" and "after" snapshots of the tattoos and labeled as either rework or coverup.

The artists were advertising the mutability of the tattooed body by demonstrating, through their albums, the possibility of image alteration. The self-imposed distinction made by the tattoo culture between rework and coverup demonstrates that a cultural

sign can be either enduring and therefore in need of covering up, or changeable through reworking. In the former case, the prior tattoo influences the image because the covering image has to be dark enough, large enough and/or shaped in a particular way to cover the original image. The new tattoo is potentially more visible because it is bigger and darker than the original. This image is discursively louder and potentially more powerful in its ability to contest cultural norms because its voice is not so easily muted or hidden. Like the women Braunberger argues transgress norms of feminine expression by flaunting their culturally excessive tattoos, the cultural surrogate that attempts to occlude its predecessor by being louder and more ostentatious may succeed in contesting the norm. One the other hand, the cover-up may invite an equally loud response from the history it attempts to drown out. Contemporary culture may react to women who are "excessively" tattooed by evaluating them according to the discursive history of sexual promiscuity, for example. This study revealed yet a third scenario, however, that denies the binary logic of two voices in conflict. The case of the working-class response to the modern primitive demonstrates this situation. The working-class history that the modern primitive's voice attempts to drown out is not only resurrected by dominant culture as a means to evaluate modern primitive identity as deviant, but also by those who identify with that history. The surrogate's cultural cover-up is so large that it calls a response from a variety of voices.

In the case of reworking, the influence of the original text is a blueprint seeking change rather than a finalized object in search of erasure. In some cases the desire, in

fact, is to highlight the original image. This text is a conscious blending between the old and new to form an image that is an intertextual experiment among artists through time. It is perhaps in this concept that theory of the truly productive representational strategy lies. The potential product of such a strategy would retain the image and discursive strategies implied by the original cultural performance and would enter into dialogue with those discourses not in the sense of voices in competition with each other who retain their concrete positions outside of each other, but in the sense that the discursive boundaries remain fluid, entering into each other to produce a representation that attends to their influence upon each other.

Unfortunately, I currently cannot conceive of what a truly hybrid representation satisfying these conditions would look like. The construction of the modern primitive in Modern Primitives comes closest to this representational strategy because it consciously and unconsciously recalls multiple histories and discourses through its written text and images. Perhaps this text, more than the others, offers this potential because of the format of the interview. The textual design, in other words, privileges individual voices and perspectives that, when read in concert, produce multiple versions of tattoo identity despite editorial interjections. Moreover, tattooed bodies retaining a variety of discursive histories are visually present. Despite the hybrid identity produced through the text, however, Modern Primitives does not completely "rework" class discourse. The groups it excludes respond to their alienation and are therefore empowered to resist.

This result was not, however, a representational strategy but rather a response to representation.

I believe that future research should focus on the process of reworking with ethnographic studies of individuals whose tattooed bodies are the result of constant rework. The aim of this research should be to use personal narratives to elicit a language with which to talk about reworking as a representational strategy. Moreover, more productive, as opposed deconstructive, efforts need to be made to translate that language into visual representation.

In addition, the conclusions drawn from this study about the efficacy of representations produced from within the tattoo community but rhetorically constructed to answer criticism from outside of the community (such as the neo-tribal books) could be tested through an analysis of tattoo web sites. Individual tattoo studios, tattoo fans and fanatics, as well as national tattoo organizations host and sponsor web sites and email lists. These sites would, therefore, be additional contexts of cultural production to consider as sites of potential hybrid representational strategies. It might even be interesting to post advertisements using tattooed models initially published in non-tattoo publications on tattoo web sites to see what the community response would be. This might offer a realistic way to divorce advertisements from their context. In other words, we need to take what we can learn from the tattoo community and produce theory that performs, as well as deconstructs, representation.

Representing and Reconstructing the Body

This study has also suggested that efforts at managing the meaning of the tattooed body often come in the form of taking the body apart. The discourse of body part classification in the tattoo competition venue, for example, isolates body parts. These parts are then evaluated according to their adherence to a set of aesthetic criteria. Legs, arms, and stomachs become flat canvases for the inscription of artwork. Status hierarchies were, therefore, inverted by these performances that privileged signs previously classified as deviant. Within the context of gender and advertising images, tattooed bodies are gendered according to what part of their body is tattooed, the style of the design, and its size. To some extent, the gender of the tattooed body is a product of the gendering of the tattoo as a sign. Similarly, the modern primitive tattooed body is judged according to design style and the spiritual process that the design signifies. The exotic body may be produced and created in representation, but the evaluation of that body tends to be accomplished via the evaluation of the signs it carries.

Culture attempts to control the meaning of the tattooed body as an entity by reducing it to a series of separate and, in their separation, manageable parts. Rather than isolating elements of the body in order to explore their potential meanings, this process closes down meaning. The body parts become dissociated from the body as an active meaning-making subject and agency is lost. This is somewhat like the relationship that Stallybrass and White describe between the classical body and the grotesque body in Bakhtin's writing. Stallybrass and White suggest that the classical body is a high status

body and, because it is so encoded, is static: "In the classical discursive body were encoded those regulated systems which were closed, homogeneous, monumental, centered and symmetrical" (22). It appears to me that the discursive efforts at managing the tattooed body are instances of attempting to control the unruly body by creating it in the image of the classical body and its discursive regimes. The tensions between gender and class positions are erased as body parts are separated, centered in frames, and placed in normalizing categories. In the effort to recode the tattooed body in a position of social privilege as high status (artistic, middle class, adhering to gender norms and natural), thus separating it from its low status history (low class, deviantly gendered and primitive), the body must first be dismembered.

It also seems to me that the problem of evaluating the body through systems of classification persists in some contemporary theory. Or, in other words, a new schema for evaluation has not yet displaced the classical notion of the body. The logic of social inscription, for example, assumes that the body is a surface, a flattened text, which, once it has been inscribed, is controlled by the force of the discourse. Foucault, for example, argues that norms produce behavior that either falls within or lies outside of the norm.

> In a sense, the power of normalization imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialties and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another. It is easy to understand how the power of the norm functions within a system of formal equality, since within a homogeneity that is the rule, the norm introduces, as a useful imperative and as a result of measurement, all the shading of individual difference. (Discipline and Punish 184)

Although Foucault suggests that difference is individualized because it is measured against the norm, these differences remain fixed within the category of the "other." The possibility for resistance lies in violating norms, but the body is still culturally evaluated based upon classical standards. That is, it is either homogenous or not, grotesque or not, normal or deviant. The gaps and fissures that entice both Foucault and Butler after him, therefore, only exist because normalizing discourse produces them. Butler consequently proceeds to deconstruct discourse in order to unmask its construction of boundaries as well as to propose that these boundaries, once constructed, become contested sites. The body, in other words, either demonstrates the controlling effect of discourse or demonstrates that it cannot be controlled by discourse, but in either sense, it is evaluated based upon the discourse. It has been, yet again, deconstructed, classified, and dismembered.

Critical responses to the power of discourse to control the body have either been to reassert subjectivity through concepts like embodied knowledge or to continue to pursue deconstruction.[3] In the former case, individual experience is exalted through forms such as personal narrative and autobiographical performance. The premise here is to privilege the self by accenting individual voices and personal experiences in order to acknowledge that difference is particular and unique. Performances by marginalized individuals about their personal oppression are seen as a way to provide a voice to the culturally silenced. While I do not disagree with the motive or the importance of this perspective, I believe it is largely unsuccessful because these performances do not tend

to invite a critical response. The options left for the audience member, in other words, are to empathize with the experience, have sympathy for the performer, or not identify at all.

In the case of deconstruction, a perspective that arguably characterizes much of this study, theorists and critics attempt to unmask discourse in order to suggest ways to resist normalization. Rather than voicing the experience of oppression, deconstruction attempts to expose the assumptions behind what produces oppression.[4] I believe that, while I have largely pursued a deconstructive agenda, this study illustrates yet another option. Rather than a wholesale dismissal of the metaphor of the body as text in favor of individual subjectivity, this study opens up the potential of *re*constructing the body in order to question the discourses that make the body as text dismembered.

The power of the tattooed body to question discourse came, for example, when it reasserted its position as a whole being without merely being a reassemblage of its various parts. In other words, the tattooed body opened up space for resistance when the tensions between the multiple discourses used to evaluate its social meaning were not controlled by one discourse overriding the others. When the tattooed man in the tattoo contest moved, for example, he became a person as opposed to a canvas. In so doing, he demonstrated his discomfort with the representational frame implied by the contest's categories and his body's position as the passive object of the audience's gaze. His body became a subject through disruption of the discursive frame. Moreover, this man's playful disruption of the frame not only provided him with agency, but also called

attention to the insufficiency of the contest categories to suppress the history of classifying the tattooed body. His movement, in other words, opens up a space for (as Della Pollock suggests in the passage I quote at the beginning of this study) history to creep back into representation.

The Tampax advertisement failed, on the other hand, because the body was controlled by the overriding discourse of gender implied by the context of the Tampax advertisement in a women's magazine. Unlike the war poster whose cultural context authorized the gender tension produced by an uneasy connection between masculine and feminine signifiers, the new context displaces the tension. The masculine and feminine codes in the poster, in other words, reflected gender identity conflicts of the mid-century. The Tampax advertisement, on the other hand, does not express the complexity of gender in the late-century. The separation of gender signs on Rosie's body within this new discursive frame produces a representation that reduces the heterogeneity of late-century gender identity into binary simplicity. Moreover, even if the gender tensions of Rosie's body could be argued to reflect late-century identity, the overriding context of the women's magazine and tampon advertisement effaces the conflict. The options I offered for reducing the controlling power of the frame by placing the advertisement in a new context place the body in a position of tension between competing discourses once again. Juxtaposed against "real" tattooed bodies in a tattoo magazine, for example, Rosie may become an image of a tattooed person as opposed to an image of an icon with a tattoo superimposed upon her surface. On the other hand, she may be perceived as a

symbol of mainstream culture's attempt to appropriate the image of a tattoo. In either case, the new context forces a discursive confrontation.

The case of the modern primitive shifts the attention from the context of the representation to the context of the bodies represented. For example, Captain Don and Tattoo Mike are tattooed bodies that cite a cultural authority that most modern primitive discourse attempts to erase. Despite that discursive effort, however, the tattoos on these bodies do not change or disappear. As a result, the tattooed bodies of Tattoo Mike and Captain Don persist in citing an authority inconsistent with modern primitive identity and they must be responded to. The tattooed bodies of Tattoo Mike and Captain Don exist at the intersection between the discourse of modern primitivism and the history it seeks to dismiss. They are constant visual reminders of that history and so continually reproduce the tension between the new and old discourse. When the tattooed body as a unified subject contests discursive control by displaying multiple and incompatible signs in concert, therefore, discourse must address the contradiction and provide an explanation for the anomaly. In the case of the tattooed bodies of Tattoo Mike and Captain Don, however, the explanation never quite satisfies. The editors, for example, seem compelled to continuously interject to reframe or explain the rhetoric and bodies of these men but, in the end, fail to reduce the dissonance produced by their presence.

The point is that the classification system of taking the body apart needs to be questioned by reconstructing the body as a whole. The parts are both in dialogue with one another and are all part of the same whole that includes multiple meanings in tension

with each other. The productive unity of the body in representation is not, therefore, a matter of isolating a particular body part or discourse, but is in the tension between discourses that converge at the site of the body. This is not a tension that seeks to be relieved by dissection; it is a tension that is productive.

A second option is available for the tattooed body in representation and it has to do with the structure of the context. The argument throughout this study has been that context controls reception and that this control is dependent upon discursive regimes. This position appears to contest Amelia Jones' argument that representations of body art are open-ended.[5] Jones' position in Body Art: Performing the Subject, rejects the notion that representation is always value-laden because she insists that this is a program that merely

> operates to reinforce the modernist project of privileging certain practices and derogating others on the basis of their interpretively determined cultural value. Such a strategy (which has entailed the derogation of body art) simply replaces the modernist formalist conception of aesthetic value with an avant-gardist notion of political value, determined by systems of judgment that are ultimately just as authoritative as those they seek to go beyond. (30-31)

Jones is dissatisfied with criticism that suggests that meaning is closed down by context and that there are preferred readings of representations. She offers, instead, that viewers/readers are invited into body art projects and that their interpretations are based on the "intersubjectivity of the interpretive exchange" (Jones 34). As a result, Jones posits that "documents" of body art projects (photographs, video) are also intersubjectively interpreted because "the meaning that accrues to the image of the body is open-ended and dependent on the ways in which the image is contextualized and

interpreted" (34). What this study suggests, however, is that the presence of body art alone does not always facilitate the production of an intersubjective context. In other words, context does not necessarily invite the viewer to interact with the authority cited by the image, as Jones would have it, but cites its own authority. The Tampax advertisement's context, for example, closes down the meaning of the image because the context is so strongly coded.

Intersubjectivity is, however, engaged when the tattooed body is represented within a context that invites multiple authoritative discourses and is itself discursively heterogeneous or, in the Bakhtinian sense, suggestive of polyphony. Polyphony, according to Morson and Emerson, is not the mere presence of multiple voices (heteroglossia) but the presence of those discourses as equals in an interchange that is unfinalizable (239). Representational contexts like the Tampax advertisement present multiple discourses, but the context monologizes in that it authorizes a preferred gender and status interpretation. The body in representation only becomes a subject, in other words, when the context refers to multiple discourses of the body and those discourses are equal allowing, no single discourse to rise to the fore. As a result, the efforts at objectifying the body through a dominant classification discourse may be thwarted because classification would be only one of many discourses in equal play in the representation.

The spatial metaphor of the threshold is, yet again, suggestive in this regard. As Morson and Emerson argue: "The dialogic sense of truth manifests unfinalizability by

existing on the 'threshold' (*porog*) of several interacting consciousnesses, a 'plurality' of 'unmerged voices'" (236). Thresholds are not defined by limits constructed by boundaries, but in their lack of limitation and the possibilities produced as a result. The threshold, as I indicated in Chapter Two, is an uncomfortable position for bodies that have been discursively classified because it suggests a pre- or post-classified and fully embodied potential. The desire for the classified body is therefore to reduce the tension by reasserting categorization. The problem posed by the tattooed body, however, is that it resists this desire. When unified it transgresses boundaries of public and private, high and low class, feminine and masculine, primitive and modern in such a way that intensifies and displaces the making of identity.[6] And, equally importantly, it seems to prefer this anomalous position. Unification occurs when the arm or leg or stomach of the tattooed body ceases to be a canvas for art or a body part marked with a masculine or feminine sign and becomes one with the body. At this point, all of the discourses that made sense out of the body parts separately intersect and their insufficiency is exposed. The tattoo as a signifier is particularly powerful in this regard because it permanently retains the lineage of the multiple discourses. The past of the tattooed body as a whole cannot be discursively erased because tattoos are permanent. When the tattooed body exists in the threshold or is produced as a threshold, therefore, it retains its productive, hybrid, unity.

The tattooed body as a unified whole, as opposed to a flat and dissected surface, also has implications in terms of pastiche and parody. Jameson's discussion of

postmodern pastiche implies that when a cultural form or text is conceived of as a cobbling together of multiple images and signs, the resulting effect is a reflective surface, a copy without an original, a simulation without referent. This study suggests, however, that the tattooed body complicates this a bit because it is not merely a surface composed of discordant images, but a whole and unified being produced through adaptation and improvisation. The tattooed body is not, as many have suggested, a mere metaphor for social inscription, therefore, but an example of when the body refuses to be a surface and becomes an agent in its own making. Moreover, the tattoo becomes a sign of that agency. The bigger and more visible the tattoo, the louder the body's voice. The tattoo is a sign that must be confronted. It is not natural, it is not normal, and it will not go away. At the same time, however, describing it as not natural and not normal does not silence it because it still will not go away. Unlike other evidence of social inscription, therefore, the tattoo is never invisible. It is because of that visibility that the tattoo becomes a resource.

The Tattooed Body as Bricoleur

Not all forms of tattooed bodies, however, are created equally in their resistant potential. What has stuck me throughout this study, for example, has been the distinction between old school and new school tattooed body aesthetic practices. The stylistic delineation is clear throughout all the discourse surrounding tattoos. Old school tattooed bodies display a conglomeration of discordant images written upon the bodies of a largely masculine clientele. New school tattoos (a term I borrow from DeMello) are

more unified in theme. New school tattoos are, for example, influenced by the full body tattoos prevalent in Japanese culture that are designed around a consistent theme. Tribal tattoos similarly seek formal aesthetic consistency. They are characterized by the solid black line style, and are generally intended to follow the contours of the tattoo client's body. Neo-tribal aesthetes, therefore, disparage old school tattooing largely because of body's lack of aesthetic symmetry. "Serious" collectors of tattoos, furthermore, are those individuals who consciously design, or have their tattoo artist design, an image that encompasses a large amount of flesh (the entire back, the entire chest and stomach, a leg, or an arm) and is thematically and/or formally consistent. For example, tattoo magazines and tattoo convention categories feature tattooed bodies with portrait work, tribal designs, Native American tattoos, black and gray, or color. Convention categories also privilege art that covers the full back or chest.

As I have consistently argued, these categories impose formalistic evaluations upon tattooed bodies that tend to finalize the potential of the body through classification. I propose, therefore, that the old-school U.S. style of tattooing may be the strongest source of resistance for tattoo collectors. It is because it does not seek to be finalized by a consistent form and because the images may not thematically or aesthetically "fit" together when unified on the body, that this body metaphorically and literally represents the power of the bricoleur to expose the constructedness of the natural body. Bricolage is an "impure" form of textual composition that combines multiple styles and images from multiple sources into a whole that does not seek to merge the styles but rather

highlights their inconsistencies. It is polyphonic. The bricoleur does not, therefore, attempt to smooth out the edges of difference because a fundamental attribute of the style lies in its contradictions and formal disjunctures. As Foster explains, bricolage is, therefore, distinct from myth:

> The difference, of course, is that myth is a one-way appropriation, an act of power, while *bricolage* is a process of textual play, of loss and gain: whereas myth abstracts and pretends to be natural, *bricolage* cuts up, makes concrete, delights in the artificial – it knows no identity, stands for no pretense of presence or universal guise for relative truths. (201)

The objections that the old school tattoo collectors and artists express in relation to the myth of the modern primitive illustrate their position as bricloeurs. These individuals are highly skeptical of the neo-tribal trend toward attributing spiritual motivations and/or consequences to the tattooing process. Old-school tattooists and clients like Stoney St. Clair and Captain Don view their tattoos as unnatural and rejoice in that anti-social position. Modern primitives, on the other hand, seek to normalize the tattoo as an expression of the essence of some natural human condition.

The men and women on the stage at the tattoo competition, who appeared uncomfortable in their position as representatives of tattoo aesthetics, likewise rejected this new norm. Their movement suggested the inadequacy of aesthetic categories to encompass their experience as well as made fun of the implied seriousness of the event. For these individuals, the "myth" of the tattoo as artwork and their consequent position as high-status representatives of that aesthetic norm was simply too ironic to bear. The bodies in the advertisements, on the other hand, failed as bricolage because they were

mythologized according to their status as symbols for gender norms. Moreover, these bodies featured single tattoos, as opposed to multiple and stylistically inconsistent tattoos. The tattoo on these bodies became a sign of gender identification monologistically inscribed upon a body like-wise standing-in for a cultural vision of gender.

The tattooed body's agency, therefore, lies not only in the context and structure of the representational frame, but also in the context and structure of the body itself. The lesson is similar; both the context and the body must rejoice in inconsistency and must refuse the controlling force of discourses that interpretively deconstruct the body, dismantling it into separate and safe categories. The transgressive power of the tattooed body is truly realized when that body is a unified whole comprised of aesthetically inconsistent images citing multiple discourses, freely moving from one context to another, juxtapositioned against itself and others.

Notes

1. Hybridization in this sense is "double-voiced" or an intentional mixing of available discourses in order to "detect and explore the implications" of hybrids (Morson and Emerson 342).

2. "Scratcher" is the jargon term in the tattoo community for a particularly inept tattoo artist who produces poor quality work.

3. For a further discussion of the distinction between the "essentialist" position engendering autobiographical performance and the "materialist" position sponsoring deconstruction see Carlson (144-186).

4. Attempts to theorize tattoos, for example, have tended to either hail the tattooed body as a metaphor for social inscription or argue that tattoos are an expression of individual identity and so delve into the motivations for becoming tattooed. Much of the research

in the last ten years has either chosen to explore the psychology of subculture and deviance as related to tattoo art (Hewitt), or has been typical of Clinton Sander's sociological research which tends to categorize the types of people who get tattoos.

5. Jones is interested in performance art projects that feature the body. She is not speaking about tattoos per se, but about body art. She defines body art as "a set of performative practices that, through such intersubjective engagement, instantiate the dislocation or decentering of the Cartesian subject of modernism" (1). I believe this study is pertinent to her claims about body art practices because it suggests that the practice of the art does not necessarily produce intersubjective contextual conditions.

6. I am indebted here to Stallybrass and White's discussion of the women encamped at Greenham Common outside of a military installation. They argue that these women drew upon multiple "historical and political resources" and so outraged the soldiers because of "maintaining their 'low' hovels" at the door of the military establishment, incensed the tax payers by violating the lines between public and private property, and perturbed even the "hooligan" populations by violating the dominance of men over women. As a result, Stallybrass and White conclude that these women "trigger powerful associative chains" that connect multiple social discourses and so demonstrate how the grotesque body "may become a primary, highly charged intersection and mediation of social and political forces" (24-25).

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VITA

Mindy Fenske was born in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, on April 17, 1969. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in speech communication and a bachelor of arts degree in English from Moorhead State University in May of 1991, graduating summa cum laude. In the Fall of 1991, she entered the graduate program at Arizona State University in communication studies with an emphasis in rhetoric. She spent her third year of graduate studies teaching English in Noshiro, Japan, before returning to Arizona to receive her master of arts degree in 1995. After taking another year-long hiatus from graduate study in 1995 to become the co-director of forensics at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, she entered the doctoral program in speech communication with a concentration in performance studies at Louisiana State University in the Fall of 1996.

In 1999, she became an Instructor in the Department of Speech Communication at Louisiana State University. In the Spring of 2001, she took on the additional responsibility of being the Managing Director of the Department of Speech Communication's Black Box theatre. In August, 2001, she became a member of the faculty in the Department of Theatre, Speech and Dance at the University of South Carolina. In the Spring of 2002, she will become an Assistant Professor at USC.

DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

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Title of Dissertation: Performativity and Performance: Representing the Tattooed Body

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Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:

October 15, 2001